Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Saviours Of Islamic Spirit

Vol. IV

HAKIM-UL-ISLAM
SHAH WALIULLAH

SAVIOURS OF ISLAMIC SPIRIT

VOLUME IV

(HAKIM-UL-ISLAM SHAH WALIULLAH)

by

Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Academy of
ISLAMIC RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS
P. O. Box 119, Nadwa, Lucknow (India)

Academy of
Islamic Research and Publications
Tagore Marg, Nadwatul Ulama,
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FOREWORD

Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be on the foremost among messengers and the last of the Prophets, Muhammad, and his progeny and the companions all, and those who followed them sincerely and summoned (the people) to his message, to the Day of Judgement.

Having finished the present volume of the *Saviours of Islamic Spirit* which takes the heroic story of religious and intellectual endeavour to Shāh Waliullah of Delhi and his successors and deputies, the writer of these lines finds himself on bended knees, glorifying the Lord from the core of his heart.

When the work on first volume of this series was started in Muharram 1372 A.H. (September 1952) beginning the story with the biographical accounts of Imām Hasan Basri and Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz, with the help of some sketchy notes jotted down for delivering a few lectures on the subject, it was difficult to visualize that the narration thus started would cover, step by step, the endeavours and struggles of all the reformers and savants of Islam in different lands from the beginning of the Islamic era to the twelfth century, and ultimately reach the stage requiring portrayal of the lives of two great revivalists, Mujaddid Alf Thāni and Shāh Waliullah Dehlawi. That this feat has been accomplished despite uncertainty of the span of life, vicissitudes

like ill-health and bereavements, heavy engagements, inconstancy and indecision and inability to read or write anything for fourteen years, it was nothing but the grace of God which caused it to be carried out successfully. The author can only offer his thanks to the Lord for this blessing by reciting the Quranic verse :

> "My Lord, inspire me to render thanks for Thy favours. Thou hast blessed me and my father and mother, and to be righteous well-pleasing to Thee; and do Thou admit me, through Thy mercy, amongst Thy righteous servants." (27-19)

And also repeat what the holy Prophet is reported to have said :

> "Praise be to Allah whose might and glory disposes one to righteous deeds."

This volume virtually completes the story of revivalist endeavour in so far as it narrates the reformative efforts of the twelfth century A. H. whose salutary effects can still be seen, at least in the Indo-Pak sub-continent, in the form of educational and religious institutions, reformative movements and literary creations designed to bring about an Islamic reawakening. The author cannot therefore be accused of any overstatement if he claims that with the series he wrote under the title of *Sirat Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*[1] in 1939 he has now brought to completion, at least in so far as this sub-continent is concerned, this narrative upto the thirteenth or rather to the fourteenth century for he has already compiled the biographies of quite a few scholars and savants of the last century (of which that of Maulana Mohammad Ilyās deserves to be mentioned here). In this manner the sixth and even a part of the seventh volume of this series has already been written by the author. It is now for other researchers and

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1. This work has since been revised and brought out in two volumes by the Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, which should be deemed as the subsequent part of this series. For English version see *'Saiyid Ahmad Shahid—'His Life and Mission'* by Mohiuddin Ahmad also published by the Academy.

scholars to shed light on the achievements of reformers and revivalists of the thirteenth century in the remaining part of the Islamic world which is also essential for an appraisal of their intellectual and religious contributions. Reformist endeavour is a continuing process, not limited to any particular age or place. Attempts will continue to be made to renew the bases of faith, to purify it of all accretions and deviations during the course of time, to spread and develop the Islamic disciplines and to fight the profane, irreligious thoughts and practices till the time Islam or rather the world exists. Nobody can therefore claim to have pronounced the last word on the subject. A saying of the holy Prophet contains this prediction :

> "Every race shall have just and God-fearing men of (religious) learning who will be cleansing this religion from deviations of the over-credulous, false teachings of the irreligious and misrepresentations of the ignorant"

The reformatory work undertaken by Shāh Waliullah was both wide and varied in nature; its predominant note was intellectual and academic; it comprised instruction, penmanship, propagation of the Scripture and the *sunnah.* The Shāh explained the wisdom of religious teachings, showed the compatibility of transmitted knowledge with intellection as well as interrelation of different juristic schools which provided guidance to the coming generations Realising significance of the changing political scene in India and making a realistic estimate of the then decadent trends he made efforts to conserve the power of Islam and identity of Muslims He tried to revive Islamic disciplines for the benefit of coming generations. The author had naturally to exert himself more in studying and applying his mind to all these aspects of Shāh's dynamic personality. There was, however, no escape from his multifarious engagements yet he was able to complete this task, solely through the grace of God, with a shorter break than those that had held up the work on the earlier parts of this series.

The writer wishes to express his thanks to his colleagues and

friends who have helped him in tracing the source material and translating lengthy Arabic and Persian passages as well as in revision of the manuscript. They include Shams Tabriz Khan, a lecturer in the Lucknow University, Muhammad Burhan-ud-din Sumbhali, lecturer of Tafsīr and Hadīth in Darul 'Uloom Nadwatul 'Ulama. 'Atīq Ahmad, late Abul 'Irfān Nadwi, Syed Muhammad Murtaza Naqvi, Mohammad Haroon and Nisārul Haq Nadwi. He is also grateful to Nurul Hasan Rashīd of Kandhla who supplied the author some valuable information about the family and descendants of Shāh Waliullah and also indicated references therefor. Syed Mohammad Ghufrān Nadwi and Ghiyāth-ud-din Nadwi also worked hard in the preparation of the index and getting this work through the press.

The author lays no claim to this work being as attractive and appealing as one would expect of the resplendent personality of Shāh Waliullah but he hopes and prays God that it may be thought-provoking and serve to inspire others for further study and research in the great task accompalished by Shāh Waliullah whose relevance to the present times is self-evident.

The author is also grateful to Syed Mohiuddin for rendering this work into English which would it is hoped, dispel some of the misgivings among those who have an access only to the works in English language, which have been created by certain writers about Shāh Waliullah because of their own spite or ignorance.

LUCKNOW
January 15, 1992.

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

I

Islamic World in the Twelfth Century

Need for the Study of Twelfth Century Conditions

In the third volume of the *Saviours of Islamic Spirit* dealing with the life and achievements of Shaikh Ahmad Alf Thāni (971-1034 A.H./1564-1624 A.D.) attention has been invited to the importance of following up the events of the tenth century for an appreciation of the accompalishments of Shaikh Ahmad in these words :.

> "We shall have to take into account the fact that an age and its environs as well as the society are like a running stream whose every wave is impinged upon and interlocked with the other. Likewise, no country howsoever isolated from its neighbours can remain unconcerned and uninfluenced by important events, revolutions and interaction of different forces in the surrounding countries, especially when these happenings pertain to a neighbour belonging to the same faith and race. It would, therefore, not be proper for us to limit our enquiry to India alone; we shall have to run the eye over to the entire world of Islam, particularly the neighbouring Muslim countries. India may not have had political relations with such countries, but religious, cultural and intellectual connexions did exist and whatever was in the wind there must

have had its repercussions here."[1]

In any discussion of the reformative efforts of Shāh Waliullah it would be all the more necessary to keep this historical principle in view for obvious reasons. Hijaz had an important role in his educational and intellectual development since he had spent more than a year[2] in that land studying *hadith* under the well-known scholar of his time, Shaikh Abu Tāhir Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm Kurdi, who had imparted instruction to numerous savants of *hadith* hailing from neighbouring countries. Shāh Waliullah came into contact with the Arab and non-Arab scholars of the two holy cities Hijaz was then a part of the great Ottoman Empire and the local administration was in the hands of the Makkan elite who ruled the country as representatives of the Caliph. Apart from *haj* which caused the convergence of scholars from every part of the Islamic world, the two holy cities, especially Medina was then a centre of learning for *hadith* attracting both learners and scholars from far off countries. The two holy cities were representative of the entire Islamic world from where one could form an estimate of the intellectual and educatinal, moral, cultural and political state of the Muslim countries as well as their attainments and failures, their literati and schoolmen, the revivalist movements of different countries, the undercurrents of disintegrative forces and even the webs of intrigues in them. One could feel there the pulse of the Islamic world and hear the sounds of its heart-beat. A man so sapient and well-disposed towards Muslims, who was being groomed for the great task of revival and renovation of God's religion, must have taken maximum advantage of the opportunity in determining his future course of action.

India had been under political tutelage of the Central Asiatic people belonging to the Turanian and Afghani stock for several centuries when their successive waves injected a new life-blood to the country's administrative and military structure. Whenever the ruling circles in India showed the signs of fatigue or infirmity, a fresh and vigorous fighting force entered India through Khaibar or Bolan Pass and since the new-comers subscri-

bed to the same faith (Islam),. the same sect, *(ahl-sunnat wal-jamā'at)*, the same law *(sharī'ah)*, the same language (Turkish or Persian) and the same culture (a mixture of Arab, Iranian, Turkish and Indian cultures), they imparted a new lease of life to the socio-political set up already existing in this country.

It should also not be forgotten that after Babur's conquest of India and the establishment of Mughal rule in this country, some of the important provinces of Afghānistān like Kābul and Qandhār came to included in the great Muslim Empire of India whose frontiers extended upto Bālā Hissār. It was during the life-time of Shāh Waliullah that Nādir Shāh of Iran attacked Delhi and the ruler of Qandhār, Ahmad Shāh Abdāli made several attempts to subdue this country. The latter ultimately shattered the united strength of the Marhatas in 1174/1761 at Panipat and changed the course of events in this country. He provided an opportunity to the decaying Mughal Empire to consolidate its power and the Muslim society, particularly its nobility to reform itself; both of which, however, proved unequal to the task and failed to avail of the opportunity made available to them. All these happenings pertain to the life-time of Shāh Waliullah, or, correctly speaking, the latter event came to pass through the efforts of Shāh Waliullah. Both these invaders belonged to the same region of Afghānistān and Irān, and hence the political and social developments of this region cannot be ignored in discussing either the socio-political conditions of India during the twelfth century of Islamic era or the events pertaining to the life-time of Shāh Waliullah.

Iran's Social and Cultural Impact on India

Just as India was profoundly influenced politically by Turkistān and Afghānistān ever since the fifth century A. H., the impact of Irān had continued to be felt in its educational, literary, cultural and intellectual spheres. Iran's literary style in prose and poetry, its mystic orders, its curriculum and educational system as well as the text-books compiled there exerted a strong influence on India. The process became more potent

after Humayun's re-capture of the country with the Iranian assistance. During the reign of Akbar, India became totally dependent on Iran for its system of education, the curriculum followed in the educational institutions and even the standard of education, particularly in the field of logic and philosophy after Amīr Fathullah Shīrāzi and Hakīm 'Ali Gilāni's emigration to India. The intellectual and cultural sway of Iran was so complete over India that we cannot overlook the happenings of Iran in our historical survey of India pertaining to that period.

Importance of Ottoman Caliphate

We can also not close our eyes to the great Turkish Empire (which had been donning the mantle of caliphate since the beginning of the tenth century A. H.) whose seat of authority lay far beyond India in the central Asia and Europe but which included almost all the Arab countries (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Najd, Hijaz and a greater part of North Africa) in its dominion. Being a great power of the day as well as the protector of the Haram at Makkah and other sacred places, and a successor to the caliphate, it was held as the power representing Islam and enjoyed the esteem of Muslims all over the world who naturally took a keen interest in its affairs. Shāh Waliullah possessing a long-suffering heart and breadth of vision, and also a deep insight into Islamic history, could not have overlooked the Ottoman caliphate. He was fully aware of the religious and political importance of the caliphate and its continued existence as an independent power for social health of the Muslims. He wanted to see Muslims politically powerful and influential not merely within their own countries but as a power to reckon with in the international field. How could he ignore the internal forces of cohesion or disintegration and the factors working for the consolidation or erosion of the Ottoman caliphate's political power during his stay for more than a year in one of its most important centres? He must have acquainted himself with the state of affairs in different dominions of the caliphate like Syria and Egypt from the people coming from these countries to Hijaz.

The scholars of Turkey and the nobility of Turkish Empire, as also their leanings and propensities, were exerting influence on the religious and intellectual circles of the caliphate's dependencies and therefore we shall have to cast a glance over the relationship Ottoman caliphate had forged with its neighbouring Christian powers of the West and the political intrigues set afoot by them for the impending upheavals leading to the disintegration of the Turkish power.

Political situation of the World of Islam

We shall first briefly survey the political situation of Islamic world: important events and rise and fall of the Muslim kingdoms and thereafter take stock of its intellectual, religious and moral state of affairs.

Ottoman Caliphate in the Twelfth Century

Shāh Waliullah was born in 1114/1702 and died in 1176/1761. In-between this period five Turkish Kings—Mustafa II (d. 1115/1703), Ahmad III (d. 1143/1730), Mahmūd I (d. 1167/1754), 'Uthmān III (d. 1171/1757) and Mustafa III (1171-1187/1757-1774) wore the crown.

Shāh Waliullah had come of age when Ahmad III, Mahmūd I, 'Uthmān III and Mustafa III were donning the purple but he spent the last five years of his life when Mustafa III held the reins of government.

Mustafa III wielded the sceptre for sixteen years and eight months. It was during his rule that war broke out between the Turks and Russia and the former had to suffer a defeat in 1183/1769. The victory of the Russians was not due to their outstanding performance in the war but could be attributed to certain accidental coincidence and mismanagement of war efforts by the Turks.[3] The Russian Commander, General Elphinston, wanted to attack Constantinople but he was not granted permission. Mustafa Khan, on the other hand, took certain measures to reform and strengthen his armed forces, and was also successful in winning a few battles. Russia offered to make peace with the

Turkey but the conditions offered by it were disgraceful to the Turks. On 3rd Sh'aban 1186/9th November 1772 a Peace Conference was held at Bucharest in Rumania (ten years after the death of Shāh Waliullah), but the Turkish Empire rejected the demands made by the Russians and decided to renew the hostilities. Russians were put to rout so badly that when Turkish forces approached Bazar Jaq (now called Tobulkhin) they found the entire city deserted by its inhabitants. Historian Hemer is on record that the Turkish troops found 'pots on fire in which meat was being cooked'. Sultan Mustafa III died on 8th Dhi Q'ada, 1187/21st January, 1774. Historians have nothing but praise for his zeal for justice and public weal. He got a number of educational institutions and mystical hospices established during his rule.[4]

Shāh Waliullah was a young man when printing presses were set up in different parts of Turkish Empire, the first of these being in Constantinople. It was also the period when the movement launched by Shaikh Muhammad b. 'Abdul Wahhāb (1115-1206/1703-1792) gained ground in Najd and Hijaz.[5] 'Ali Bey (popularly known as Shaikh-ul-Balad) gradually consolidated his hold over Egypt during the reign of 'Uthman III. He conspired with the Admiral commanding the Russian fleet stationed in the Mediterranian Sea to help him with arms and ammunitions to make Egypt independent of Turkish rule. 'Ali Bey succeeded in gaining control over Gaza, Nablus, Quds, Yafa and Damascus. He was making preparations to advance towards Anatuliya when one of his Memluk Commanders, Muhammad Bey (also known as Babi-ul-Zahab) raised the banner of revolt against 'Ali Bey with the result that he had to return to Egypt whe c he suffered a defeat. The ensuing disorder and rebellion resulted in the bombardment of Beirut by the Russian warships which destroyed three hundred houses. In Muharram 1187/March, 1773 the forces of 'Ali Bey and Muhammad Bey fought pitched battles. 'Ali Bey was defeated and taken prisoner. 'Ali Bey who died of wounds sustained in the battle, was beheaded and his head along with those of four Russian Commanders were presented to the

Turkish viceroy Khalīl Pāshā who sent them on to Constantinople. Turkish rule was once again restored over Egypt.

Hijaz

Sultan Mahmūd I (1143-1167/1730-1754) was the reigning sovereign when Shāh Waliullah reached Hijaz and stayed there in the two holy cities for over a year. The viceroy of Turkish Caliph in Hijāz, then known as Amīr of Hijāz, was Muhammad b. 'Abdullah[6] b. Sa'eed b. Zayd b. Muhsin al-Hasani (d. 1169/1756) who had been raised to governorship of Hijāz[7] after the death of his father in 1143/1730. His rule was marked by family dissensions and internal strife. His uncle Mas'ūd b. Sa'eed forced Muhammad b. 'Abdullah to relinquish the charge of Hijaz in his favour in 1145/1732 but Muhammad b. 'Abdullah regained the Amirship after a year though for a short period only. Mas'ūd b. Sa'eed thereafter retained governorship of Hijaz till his death.[7] He is stated to be a prudent ruler endowed with qualities of state manship and was able to maintain law and order in Hijaz.[8]

Insecurity of wayfaring, depredations by the Bedouins and general lawlessness in Arabia during the middle of the twelfth century A. H. are vividly portrayed in the chronicles and travel accounts of haj pilgrims of the time. These chaotic conditions were occasioned by the region being located at a remote distance from Constantinople, the centre of the Turkish Empire, the policy of non-interference pursued by the Ottoman caliphate in the internal affairs of Hijaz, high regard for the nobility of Makkah who were treated as descendants of the holy Prophet, complaisance for the Arabs in general and hereditary rule of one family over Hijaz for the last several hundreds of years. There cannot be any doubt that Shāh Waliullah would have taken notice of the disorderly conditions in Hijaz, observed the family feuds for gaining hold upon the government of the region as well as weaknesses of administrative machinery and kept himself abreast of the undesirable events of 1145/1732, which would have more probably taken place during his stay in Hijāz. He

must have drawn his own conclusions about the lack of moral sense and discipline among the people there.

Yemen

The pattern of government in Yemen was almost similar to that of Hijaz. It was politically a part of the Turkish Empire and its governor was appointed by the Caliph but the regency of the country was supplemented by another institution known as *Imāmat* which had been in existence there since the middle of the third century A.H. Normally the Imāms were Saiyids belonging to the Zaidi sect,[9] on whose hands the people of Yemen used to take the pledge of fidelity. The Imāms had to be well-versed in religion, particularly their own school of jurisprudence in which they were regarded as the final authority. Yemen was made a part of Turkish Empire during the reign of Sultan Sulaimān Qanūnī b. Yā'ūz-Salīm, when As-Saiyid al-Mutahhir (b. al-Imām Sharaf-ud-din d. 980/1572) was the ruler and Imām of Yemen. As-Saiyid al-Mutahhir fought against the Turkish Commander Sinān Pāsha and lost the battle[10] but the Turks allowed the office of Imām to continue with a large measure of internal autonomy as in Hijaz. Al-Imām al-Manṣūr b'illāh al-Husain b. al-Mutawakkil 'alallāh Qasim b. Husain (1139/1726-1161/1748) was the Imām of Yemen when Shāh Waliullah visited Hijaz. Although Yemen had been ruled by the Zaidis for quite sometime, the majority of the people belonged to the Shafi'ite sect of the Sunnites. Yemen had also been an important centre for study of *hadīth* during the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries. Yemen gave birth to such eminent scholars of *hadīth* as Muhammad b. Isma'il al-Amir (d. 1142/1729) during the twelfth century who wrote the *Sublus-Salām*. Another great scholar of hadith was Muhammad b 'Ali As-Shaukāni (d. 1255/1839) the author of *Nail al-Awtār*. Shāh Waliullah's presence in the neighbouring Hijaz must have afforded him an opportunity to study the writings of Yemeni scholars.

Iran

It was the time when Iran was being ruled, for the last two

hundered years by the Safawids who, in accordance with the inexorable law of nature, were then showing signs of decline. As Ibn Khaldūn says once a ruling dynasty is striken in years it never regains its vigour again. Its weakness was put to advantage by the neighbouring Afghānistān whose ambitious ruler Mahmūd Khan of Ghilzai attacked Iran in 1134/1721. Isfahān was captured and Husain Shāh of Iran was taken captive by the Afghans who wanted to conquer the entire country but being small in numbers it was not possible for them to maintain their hold on the whole country. Mahmūd Khan died in 1137/1724 after holding the sceptre for thirty years. Disorder prevailed in the country during the rule of his successor Ashraf Khan. Peter the Great of Russia attacked northern Iran and annexed several districts. Shāh of Iran was also taken captive but his heir apparent Prince Tahmasp was fortunate in having a courtier who was of humble origin but had the courage and capability of those who carve out a kingdom for themselves. This was the deliverer of Iran, Nādir Shāh Afshār.

Nādir Shāh Afshār

Nādir restored the ancestral throne to Tahmasp but the Safawid dynasty was crumbling and nothing could put new life into it. The whole country was sinking in anarchy and chaos. Nādir availed himself of the situation and raised a formidable force under his command. His zeal and courage recalled Iranians to life who helped him to take the reins into his hand. He turned out the Afghāns from Iran in 1143/1730 and forced the Russians, after checking their advance at the Caspian Sea in 1146/1733, to concede him a treaty on favourable terms. Nādir blocked up the Arabs on Iran's western frontiers and obliged the Turks to retreat from its northern region. He captured several dominions of the old Iranian empire and by 1148/1735 secured recognition of Iran's frontiers as they had been in the time of Murād IV.

Giving a brief description of Nādir Shāh's achievements, William A. Langer writes in his *Encyclopaedia of World History*:

"He accepted the throne on the condition that the Persians renounce the Shia heresy. He himself, being a Turk by race, was also a Sunnite. But he never succeeded in making orthodoxy accepted by the Persians. Nādir and his generals reduced Baluchistan and Balkh in 1737. Nādir thereupon proceeded in 1738 to invade India. Kabul, Peshawar and Lahore were taken in 1739, a large army of Mughal emperor was defeated at Karnal, near Delhi. Delhi was taken and a tremendous massacre[11] followed Nādir left the Mughal emperor on his throne, but levied an indemnity of almost half a billion dollars and took all the territory north and west of Indus. Nādir overran Bukhara and Khwarezm (Khiva) in 1740. This marked the greatest extent of his dominion and at the same time a turning point in his career. Nādir was a great soldier, but he lacked real statesmanship and administrative ability. His efforts to stamp out Shi'ism resulted in growing unrest,[12] and the need for suppressing discontent made the Shāh more ruthless and cruel. In the end he ruined the country by his huge exactions and despotic exploitation. Nādir was assassinated by one of his tribesman in 1747."[13]

A period of anarchy followed during which the succession was hotly disputed. Nādir's nephew 'Ali Quli 'Ādil Shāh 1747-48) ascended the throne and executed all his family members save prince Shāh Rukh Mirza who was then 14 years of age. 'Ādil Shāh was deposed by his brother Ibrahīm within a year of his accession to the throne and blinded but Ibrahīm's forces rebelled. The generals of Ibrahīm defeated him in a battle, took him captive and then put him to sword. 'Ādil Shāh was also slain. Thereafter Karīm Khan of Zand dynasty succeeded in maintaining himself in power for 29 years from 1164/1750 to 1193/1779. Karim Khan who had a strong following in the south, Shiraz being his capital, was a just and benevolent ruler during whose reign the country was enabled to recover from the ravages of warfare His death was lamented by the Persians. The Zand dynastry also came to an end after a succession of weak sovereigns ascending the throne after Karim Khan. Lutf 'Ali was slain in 1209/1794 leaving the throne of Iran to be

occupied by the Qāchārs, but as the period relates to post-Shāh Waliullah era, we need not go into its details.

Ahmad Shāh Abdāli of Afghanistan

Afghanistan had been divided by Iran India and the Khans of Bukhara before the outset of eighteenth century Qandhar gained independence in 1706 but it was captured by Nādir Shāh in 1737 who extended his dominion upto the western part of India.

Ahmad Khan Abdāli, an Afghan, was brought before Nādir Shāh as a prisoner of war. Impressed by his abilities, Nādir took him as a personal attendant. Ahmad Khan won the confidence of Nādir Shāh and was given the charge of important assignments. After Nādir Shāh was assassinated, the Afghans proceeded towards Qandhar and chose Ahmad Khan as their leader and began to address him as Ahmad Shāh. He belonged to the Durrani (Saddozai) branch of Abdāli tribe and hence he chose to be called as Durr-i-daurān. His family is accordingly known as Durrāni.

Ahmad Shāh established Durrāni kingdom in Afghanistan with Meshhed in eastern Iran, Baluchistan, the Punjab and Kashmir in India forming part of his empire. He was, as a matter of fact, no less remarkable among soldier-statesmen of the eighteenth century who had distinguished themselves by carving out an empire for themselves by the dint of their own genius. He was a benevolent and just ruler possessing an indomitable ambition. Like Mahmūd of Ghazna he made several attacks on India between 1747 to 1769. His military ability, religious zeal, regard for the learned and nobility of character have been acknowledged by his contemporaries. He was successful after a long time, in welding diverse political entities of Afghanistan into a powerful empire.[14]

Ahmad Shāh Abdāli died in 1186 A.H. (23rd October 1772) in Qandhar. Unfortunately he was not succeeded by a capable ruler as it so often happens with conquerors and founders of empires. Timūr Shāh ascended the throne but he lacked the

qualities of head and heart possessed by his illustrious father with the result that by the end of his twenty years' rule the newly built empire began to show signs of decay. Timūr died in 1793 and soon thereafter, during the reign of his son Mahmūd, power was usurped by the Barakzai tribe which continued to hold it until kingship was overthrown in Afghanistan in 1975.[15]

Religious and Intellectual Situation

After this brief survey of the political conditions of the Islamic world it appears necessary to cast a glance at the religious thought and intellectual movements of the time since these have a greater bearing on the life and work of Shāh Waliullah.

Scholars of the Twelfth Century

A careful examination of the history of intellectual endeavour by the Muslims would reveal that unlike several other peoples, their educational and intellectual movements as well as literary activities have never been dependent nor even linked with the rise and fall of political powers of the time. We find several peoples showing the signs of intellectual decay with the decline of their political power. It seems they lose their self-confidence and intellectual vigour in the absence of political support and encouragement.

This process has been quite different with the Muslims who have produced, not unoften, master spirits during the period of their political decay and acute internal disorder. The Mongols had completely destroyed the intellectual centres of the Islamic world during the seventh century A.H. and the literary activities seemed to be touching the all-time low after the destruction of Baghdad. But we come across such giants of learning as Shaikh-ul-Islam Taqi-ud-din Ibn Daqīq al-'Id (d. 702/1302) in the field of *hadith*, a theological scholastic like 'Ala-ud-din al-Bāji (d. 714/1314), the great savant Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah (d. 728/1328), the historian Shams-ud-din az-Zahabi (d. 748/1347) and the grammarian Abu Hayyan Nahavi (d. 745/1344) in the opening decades of the eighth century.

The reason is that the craving or desire to serve religion and acquire a deep knowledge of religious sciences is something instinctive—an inborn tendency—in the case of Muslims rather than being dependent on external influences like state patronage. The impulses like achieving the pleasure of God, continuing the mission of the prophets and safeguarding religion from corruption have continued to be potent even during the times of political unrest, decay of most powerful Muslims powers like the Ottoman caliphate and hot contests by different contenders for taking the helm of state into their hands in different countries including even Hijaz, the centre of Islam. We find religious scholars in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Hijaz, Yemen, Iran and India, during periods of political instability, devoting their energies to teaching and preaching or other literary pursuits and the mystics of Islam engaged in attaining perfection of spirit and purification of the self. This is why we find, during this period also, several scholars and godly souls outshining their predecessors.

Let us consider, for instance, the endeavour in the field of *hadīth*. Abul Hasan al-Samadi al-Kabīr (d. 1138/1726) continued to teach the subject for a long time in the holy mosque and wrote *Al-Hawāmish-al-Sittah* which is the well-known commentary on the six authentic works of *hadīth*. Muhammad Hayāt Sindi (d. 1163/1750) is another eminent scholar of the same period. In Syria Shaikh Isma'il al-'Ajlūni also known as Al-Jirahi (d. 1162/1749) was deemed as an authority on the subject and his work *Kashf-al-Khifa wa-Muzil-al-bās 'Ammash-tahara min-al-Ahādīth-'ala-al-Sunnatan Nās* in two volumes is an encyclopaedic work delineating the authentic and weak *ahādith*. The book shows his comprehensive knowledge of the sources of even those reports which were considered as weak or were popular among the masses but with little information to throw light on their origin.

The two holy cities of Makkah and Medina were the great centres of *hadīth* where Shaikh Abu Ṭāhir al-Kaurāni al-Kurdi and Shaikh Hasan al-Ujaimi used to deliver lectures on the subject. Sulaiman b. Yahya al-Ahdal (d. 1197/1783) was the

most respected savant of *hadith* in Yemen during that period. Muhammad b. Ahmad as-Safārīni (d. 1188/1773) was also an authority on *hadīth* and *usūl* who wrote *Ad-Durr al-Masnu'āt fil Ahādīth al-Mauzū'āt*. Yemen had another respected scholar of *hadīth* Al-Amīr Muhammad b. Isma'il al-Hasani al-San'ani (d. 1142/1729) who wrote two valuable commentaries. His *Subul-al-Salām* is a commentary on *Bulūgh al-Marām* and the other work known as *Tauzīh al-Afkār* is an exegesis of *Tanqīh al-Anzār*. We also find Muhammad Sa'eed al-Sunbul (d. 1175/1761) whose *Al-Awā'il-al-Sunbuliya fi Awail-i-Kutub al-Hadīth* is held as a manual by the teachers of *hadīth*. Yet another scholar of the time Muhammad b. 'Abdul Bāqi al-Zarqāni (d. 1122/1710) was held in such a high esteem that several writers have paid him tribute as "the last scholar of *hadīth* in Egypt."[16]

Shaikh 'Abdul Ghani al-Nāblīsi (d. 1143/1730) was the most celebrated scholar of the time whose depth of knowledge, number of disciples and facile pen had earned him the title of the Great Teacher. His works are reported to be as many as two hundred and twenty-three. It was also the time when Isma'il Haqqi (d. 1127/1715) wrote the famous commentary *Rūh-al-Bayān fi-Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Among the scholars of Baghdad 'Abdullah b. Husain As-Suwaidi (d. 1174/1760) was a prolific writer.[17]

Jamia Azhar of Cairo, Jamia Zaitūniya of Tunisia and Jamia al-Qarwin of Fās were the three well-known institutions of learning but we also find the names of Madrasa Hāfiziyah, al-Madrasata al-Shilliyah and al-Madrasata al-'Azrawia mentioned in the chronicles of the time. The historians also refer to the Naqshbandi, Khilwati, Shāzili, Qādiri and Rifā'i mystical orders whose adherents were spread all over the Muslim world from Turkey to Indonesia.

Literary taste and Spiritual atmosphere

The educated class was interested in literary creations specially poetry, polemies, enigmatical anecdotes and funny

stories but hardly anything unique or outstanding in these fields has been left by it. The literary style was marked by empty rhetoric and rhythmic verbosity. Turkish cultural traditions seem to be predominent in the intellectual life of the era as no eminent academician or thinker is to be found during the period.[18] The four volumes of *Silk al-Durr* by Murādi abound in eulogical verses and lyrical poetry while other contemporary works show an inclination towards description of miracles of the saints and similar popular beliefs. The scholars of the dependent territories used to visit Constantinople for taking up civil and military posts under the caliphate. The main components of the then curriculum were logic, mathematics, syntax and elegance, jurisprudence and *hadīth*. Amulets and charms were popular. A few scholars had even versified the juridical code of *Qadūri*. Several Arab scholars were conversant with Persian as well as Turkish since the latter was official language of the empire. The people in Syria had been more influenced by Turkish modes and manners for a number of Turk scholars had taken up residence there and they were able to speak Arabic fluently. It was deemed a great honour to teach in the Jamia Amwi of Damascus. Several scholars and mystics lectured on *Fatuhāt-i-Makkiyah* and *Fasūs-al-Hakam*. *Sharh Jāmi* and *Mukhtasar al-Ma'āni* were the two other popular manuals of study. Mysticism had a great appeal for the masses and even the religious scholars and teachers of *hadith* like Shaikh 'Abdul Ghani al-Nāblisi and others subscribed to the prevailing mystic taste for the intuitive concept of Unity of Being.[19]

Popularity of Speculative Sciences in Iran

Ismāil Safawi (905/930-1499/1524) had founded the great Safawaid dynasty in Iran and taken vigorous steps to convert the Iranians to his creed. The Sunnite faith was almost wiped out from the country. Iran had been the birth-place of such renowned scholars of *hadith* as Imām Muslim, Imām Abu Dāwūd, Imām Nasāi and Imām Ibn Majah and eminent scholars of the stature of Abu Is'hāq Shirāzi, Imāmul Harmayn Abul Ma'āli

'Abdul Malik Juwaini and Imām Abu Hāmid Al-Ghazzali, but it had severed its connexion with *hadīth*, jurisprudence and other religious disciplines. The Iraninan sovereigns were generally well-disposed towards philosophy and other speculative sciences while Shi'ism had a soft corner for *a'itazāl* and its philosophical thought. The well-known scholar, physician and mathematician Khwāja Nasīr-ud-din Tūsi (d. 672/1273), who wrote *Sharh Ishārāt Ibn Sina* was a Mutazalite Shia and a close counsellor of Halaku.[20] It was because of his influence, exerted through state patronage, that philosophy, mathematics and other speculative and physical sciences became popular in the entire Mongol possessions which included Turkistan, Iran and Iraq. The reign of second Safawid ruler Shāh Tahamāsp (d. 984/1577) saw the rise of another illuminist scholar and philosopher Mīr Ghiyāth-ud-din Mansūr[21] (d. 948/1541) who established Madrasah Mansūriyah of Shirāz and enjoyed the patronage of Shāh Tahmāsp. His disciples as well as those subscribing to his school of thought spread his teachings in India. One of his disciples Amīr Fath Ullah Shīrazi (d. 997/1589) came to India in the closing decades of the tenth century; he was warmly received by the Mughal emperor Akbar. Āzād Bilgrāmi claims that Fath Ullah Shīrazi brought the works of Sadr-ud-din Shīrāzi, Mīr Ghiyāth-ud-din Mansūr and Fazil Mirza Jān (d. 944/1537) to India and introduced them into the curriculum of the country.

Mīr Bāqar Dāmād (d. 1041/1631) emerged as a dominating figure during the middle of the eleventh century, whose brilliant exposition of intellectualism made his style and thought acceptable to the educated class from Iran to India. He occupied an honourable place in the court of Shāh 'Abbās Safawi (d. 1037/1628) and his *Al-Ufaq al-Mubīn* was taken as the best example of imaginative writing. Not long after him Sadr-ud-din Shirāzi (d. 1050/1640) made a mark as an illuminist scholar and liberal-minded philosopher. His two works *Al-Asfār-al-Arba'a* and *Sharh Hidāyat-al-Hikmah* (also known as *Sidra*)[22] achieved a world-wide fame. The natural disposition of the Iranians

which easily runs riot completely endorsed the sophistry and windy quibbling of Sadr-ud-din Shirāzi. His syllogisms consisting of assumed prepositions created absorbing dilemmas but were actually worthless in content. Still, they gained a complete mastery over the educational system of all the Muslim countries during the course of the tenth to the twelfth century and established ascendancy of speculative sciences. All that was left for the pedagogues and students was to interpret the abstruse thought and pompous prolixity of these masters or to write commentaries on their works. The least deviation from this universal norm or to question their validity was taken as a sign of one's ignorance and stupidity.

This intellectual trend of Iran was bound to influence Afghanistan, particularly Herat which lay in the west of the country close to Iran. A scholar, Qazi Muhammad Aslam Harawi (d. 1061/1651) by name, drank deep in the philosophy and logic of Iranian masters while his illustrious son Qazi Mīr Zāhid alias Mīr Zahid (d. 1101/1690) developed these to the pink of perfection He spent a greater part of his life in India writing *Sharh Mawāqif*. *Sharh Tahzib* and *Risālah Qutbiyah*. The three commentaries known as *Zawāhid-i-Thalātha* became popular text books in the country. Notwithstanding his mastery in the speculative sciences, Mīr Zahid was not well-versed in *fiqh* and *hadith* and other religious disciplines. He was not able to teach even *Sharh Waqāyah*, a book of law prescribed for the intermediate standard. Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz writes in one of his letters that "one of the nobles used to take lessons in *Sharh Waqāyah* from Mīr Zāhid but (as he did not consider himself adequately versed in *fiqh*) he never taught his disciple until my grandfather (Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm who took lessons in speculative sciences from him) had arrived."[23] On the other hand Mīr Zāhid's proficiency in speculative sciences was so perfect that Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz says: "I hold dear the writings of Mirza Jān, but those of Ākhund are dearest to me."[24]

Iran was exerting influence not only on Afghanistan and India but also on Syria and Iraq where the scholars of speculative

sciences were admired and the subject was gradually introduced in their educational curriculum.

Morals, Culture and Beliefs

Proficient scholars and experts were, in those days, to be found in all branches of arts and sciences, different mystic orders were popular, the people showed a keenness to learn and act upon the teachings of the holy Prophet, a great number of administrators were pious and virtuous, the governments tried to enforce *shari'ah* as the law of the land, mosques and madrasas were full of devotees and learners, the masses were respectful of Islam and its teaching as well as religious scholars and masters who had attained spiritual perfection, and they also exhibited their zeal for Islam, yet there was an all-pervading stagnation showing signs of general decay. Individual morals and social behaviour evinced traces of usages and practices borrowed from the non-Muslims. The rulers were autocrats and the governments were despotic. The nobles and the rich had everywhere adopted the vices of the prodigals and given a free rein to their desires. The social set-up had given birth to a class of people who lived by flattery or as a parasite without doing any work. Superstitious beliefs and overcredulousness in certain sections of the masses had overshadowed the pure and simple creed of *tawheed*, Oneness of God, manifesting itself in excessive veneration of the sain's and shrines which often bordered upon the cult of the polytheists.

An American writer, Lothrop Stoddard has in his *New World of Islam* given a graphic description of the then world of Islam which may be deemed as a bit exaggerated by some, but is factually correct on the whole. He brings out certain aspects of Muslim society which are generally overlooked by those who are its members, but they catch the attention of one forming an estimate of that society from outside. However, it would be worthwhile to cite his observation here without subscribing entirely to his view of the then state of affairs. He writes:

> "By the eighteenth century the Moslem world had sunk to the lowest depth of its decrepitude. Nowhere were

then any signs of healthy vigour; everywhere were stagnation and decay. Manners and morals were alike execrable. The last vestiges of Saracenic culture had vanished in a barbarous luxury of the few and an equally barbarous degradation of the multitude. Learning was virtually dead, the few universities which survived had fallen into dreary decay and languishing in poverty and neglect. Government had become despotism tempered with anarchy and assassination. Here and there a major despot like the Sultan of Turkey or the Indian 'Great Mughal' maintained some semblance of state authority, albeit provincial pashas were for ever striving to erect independent governments, based, like their masters, on tyranny and extortion. The pashas, in turn, strove ceaselessly against unruly local chiefs and swarms of brigands who infested the countryside. Beneath this sinister hierarchy groaned the people, robbed, bullied and ground into dust. Peasant and townsmen had alike lost all incentive to labour or initiative, and both agriculture and the trade had fallen to the lowest level compatible with bare survival.

As for religion, it was as decadant as everything else. The austere monotheism of Mohammad had become overlaid with a rank growth of superstition and puerile mysticism. The mosques stood unfraquented and ruinous, deserted by the ignorant multitude, which, decked out in amulets, charms and rosaries, listened to squalid fakirs or ecstatic dervishes, and went on pilgrimage to the tombs of 'holy men', worshipped as saints and 'intercessors' with that Allah who had become too remote a being for direct devotion of these benighted souls. As for the moral precepts of the Koran, they were ignored or defied. Wine-drinking and opium-eating were well nigh

universal, prostitution was rampant, and the most degrading vices flaunted naked and unashmed."[25]

Notes and References :—

1. *Saviours of Islamic Spirit,* Lucknow, 1983, Vol. III, p. 12.
2. Shāh Waliullah arrived in Hijaz by the end of 1143/1730 and left the country in the beginning of 1145/1731 after performing two *hajs..*
3. For details see *Tārikh al-Daulatil 'Alyata al-'Uthmania* by Mohammad Farid Bek al-Mahāmi, Beirut.
4. *Ibid.,* pp. 329-340.
5. Shortly thereafter Saud Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz (1163-1229/1748-1814) established his rule in 1218/1803 over Hijaz and a greater part of Arabia with the help of upsurge created by the new movement. In 1234/1819 Khadiv Muhammad Ali, the governor of Egypt, recaptured Arabia and restored Turkish suzerainty. Amīr 'Abdullah b. Sa'ud b. 'Abdul 'Aziz was sent to Constantinople where he was ultimately slain.
6. Certain historians give his name as Muhammad b. 'Abdul Ilāh, perhaps as a mark of respect to the holy Prophet.
7. The Amirs of Makkah (also known as *Ashrāf* and selected from the Hasani family of the town) had held the governorship since the beginning of the fourth century. The first Sharif of Makkah was appointed by Abbasid Caliph Al-Mutilillāh (334-363/945-974). The Memluk kings of Egypt used to appoint the Sharif of Makkah until Sultan Salim extended his dominion to Syria and Egypt. Sultan Salim confirmed the then Sharif of Makkah As-Saiyid Barakāt, and then his son Saiyid Abu Nami. The system continued until Husain, the Sharif of Makkah rebelled against the Ottoman caliphate in Sh'aban 1334/June 1916. He was expelled from Hijaz in January 1926 when Sultan Ibn Saud captured Hijaz.
8. *Al-'Ālām,* Vol. VIII, pp. 111-112; *Tadyīl Shifa al-Gharām al-Akhbar-al-Balad al-Harām,* Vol. II, pp. 309/310.
9. Muhammad Abu Zahra writes in the *Tārikh al-Mazāhib al Islāmiyah* that among the Shi'ite sects *Zaidis* are moderate in their beliefs and comparatively nearer to the *Sunnis.* They have not elevated the Imāms to the position of prophets and hold them only as enjoying paramountcy among the followers of the Prophet. They

do not consider the companions of the Prophet as heretics nor hold the view that the Prophet had nominated any particular person as Imām. In their view the Prophet had only indicated the characteristics of the Imām which were found in 'Ali. According to Abu Zahra the founder of this sect, Imām Zaid b. Imām Zainul 'Ābidīn, acknowledged the first three Caliphs as Imāms and held their caliphate to be valid (pp. 47/49).

10. For details see *Al-Barq-al-Yamāin fial-Fath al-Uthmāni* by Qutb-ud-din Nahrwāli Patni.

11. Frasher says that the slaughter lasted from 8 a. m. to 3 p. m. and that the number of slain was 120,000, though some place it as high as 150,000. Scott's estimate of 8000 is certainly too low and it is not improbable that Wolsely Haig who gives the figure of 30,000 errs in the same direction. (*Cambridge History of India,* Vol. IV, p. 361).

12. It is difficult to subscribe to the view put forth by certain historians, both Europeans and Muslims, that Nādir was a Sunnite or that he tried to stamp out Shi'ism from Iran. Nādir might have taken certain steps as a political strategy which gave rise to this speculation but during his stay at Delhi he never did or said anything to suggest that he was a Sunnite or that he wanted to propagate that faith in Iran.

13. William A. Langer, *The New Pictorial Encyclopedia of World History,* New York, (1972). Vol. I, p. 547.

14. More of these details will be found in a subsequent section dealing with Ahmad Shāh Abdāli.

15. For political conditions of Afghanistan see p. 139 ff, of *Saiyid Ahmad Shaheed, His Life and Mission* by Mohiuddin Ahmad. It was the Barakzai ruler with whom the Saiyid had to deal with. The last king of Afghanistan, Zāhir Shāh, was deposed in 1975.

16. Muhammad b. 'Ali ash-Shaukāni's *Al-Badr-al-Tal'e bi Muhāsin min-B'ad al-Qarn-al-Sāb'e* and *Silk-al-Durrfi-'Ayān al-Qarn al-Thāni 'Ushr lil-Murādi* contain detailed accounts on the subject.

17. *Silk-ud-Durr and Al-Badr-al-Tāl'e.*

18. Turks are a martial race interested in practical affairs and administration. During their long rule the few outstanding scholars like Abul Sa'ūd, Tash Kubrazada and Khalifa Chalpi are just exceptions to the common taste of the Turks.

19. *Silk-al-Durr.*

20. See *Tarikh Ikhbar wa Athar Khwaja Nasir-ud-din Tusi* published by the Tehran University.

21. He wrote a commentary on Shihab-ud-din Suhrawardi Maqtul's *Hayakil al-Nur* under the title of *Ishraq Hayakil al-Nur.*

22. *Sidra* came to be included in the curriculum in India during the eleventh century of Hijrah. No student was deemed to be a graduate without attaining proficiency in this book.

23. *Malfuzat*, of Shah Abdul Aziz, No. 82.

24. *Ibid.*, No. 83.

25. Lothrop Stoddard, *The New World of Islam*, London, 1921, pp. 20-21.

II

India

Political Condition

Shāh Waliullah was born in 1114/1703, four years before Aurangzib's death in 1118/1707. Of what we know of the history of Indian sub-continent it cannot be gainsaid that he was the most powerful sovereign of the greatest kingdom that had ever existed in India after Ashoka the Great. Sir Jadunath Sirkar writes in the *Cambridge History of India* that his 'empire embraced, in the north, Kashmir and all Afghanistan from Hindukush southwards to a line thirty-six miles south of Ghazni; on the west coast it stretched in theory to the northern frontier of Goa and inland to Belgaum and the Tungbhadra river. Thereafter, the boundry passed west to east in a disputed and ever shifting line through the centre of Mysore, dipping south-eastwards to the Coleroon river (north of Tanjore). In the north-east Chittagong and Monas river (west of Gauhati) divided it from Arakan and Assam[1]." Other historians, too, acknowledge that since the ancient period to the rise of British raj in India, no kingdom had held sway on such a vast territory.[2] Assam, which had always maintained its separate ethnic, cultural and religious identity, was, for the first time, conquered by Mir Jumla for the Mughals.[3] Aurangzib has been criticized by certain non-Muslim historians, Europeans and Hindus, for his zeal for Islam[4] but almost all are agreed that he was a ideal person in many ways

and was unrivalled in sound judgement, courage, firm determination, administrative ability and simple habits. Pious in his personal life, his contemporaries called him a "Darvish clad in the Imperial purple."[5]

Achievements of Aurangzib

With unbending resolve Aurangzib applied himself, soon after ascending the throne, to root out the un-Islamic legacy of Akbar's rule and to eliminate the influence of Shi'ites (who had entrenched themselves in Deccan and hence he had to devote a considerable part of his time and energy there). The pre-Islamic culture of Iran had made a deep impact on India, during the rule of Akbar, and was still continuing in the shape of Iranian Calendar, the festival of Nauroz and similar other customs and usages. Aurangzib interdicted all these practices, appointed *muhtasibs* (censors of public morals) as required by the *shari'ah*, to check the people from indulging in impermissible and evil conduct, discontinued uncanonical and illegal exactions (*abwāb*), forbade music and dancing at his court and gave up the former custom of the Emperor giving a *darshan* to the populance, appointed Qazis and gave them powers to decide all cases in accordance with *sharī'ah* and took personal interest in the compilation of the *Fatāwa-i-'Alamgīri*, the greatest digest of Muslim law, which has been acknowledged as the most authentic and comprehensive digest even in the Muslim countries like Egypt, Syria and Turkey.[6] He discontinued the un-Islamic court etiquette of *kornish* and *adab* and instituted, in their place, the Islamic way of salutation. In the words of Iqbal, succincty expressed in a verse, Aurangzib was:

A gallant lover of *tauhid* he was,
An Ibrahim in this idol house.

Apart from the reformatory steps taken by Aurangzib, some of which were of a revolutionary nature and also of lasting value for the conservation of Islam in India, he possessed those qualities of enlightened kingship which were indispensable for the ruler of such a vast kingdom. His high ideals of conduct

and duty and the keen interest he took in every affair of state, big and small, had given him absolute authority over his government. Once he wrote to his father Shahjahan: "I cannot be reproached for inglorious inaction,"[7] and history bears testimony to the truth of his assertion. In reply to the advice tendered by a noble that the Emperor's incessant application to affairs of state might endanger his health, Aurangzib had said : "......I am sent into the world by Providence to live and labour, not for myself, but for others; that it is my duty not to think of my own happiness, except so far as it is inseparably connected with the happiness of my people......It was not without reason that our great Sa·di emphatically exclaimed:

> Cease to be Kings! Oh, cease to be Kings!
> Or determine that your dominions shall be
> governed only by yourselves."![8]

It was possible only for a man with indomitable will, unshaken resolution, invincible health, sense of responsibility and awe of God to personally supervise the minutest details of the administrative business of such a vast empire. It is really astounding that he paid the same amount of attention to the matters of policy as to measures taken for their execution. During his long sojourn in Deccan he kept himself informed of all events and developments in the remaining part of his kingdom. He was assisted by a large staff of official reporters, called *waki'navis*. with whose aid he was "able to exercise his passion for business, to examine the minute details of administration, and exercise his patronage down to the appointment of the merest clerk."[9] In the midst of his manifold engagements, he had marked out his path of duty and steadfastly pursued it alone with a devotional zeal.

Weak Descendants of Aurangzib

The glorious throne of the great kingdom left by Aurangzib (envisaged by him not as the defender but as the servant of faith), came to be occupied by those who had, it seems, taken a vow that they would redress the mistake committed by Aurangzib in

the preservation of Islam and promulgation of its laws in India. Their actions reflected their opposing tendencies in every direction. Aurangzib had made the empire vast and strong by his diligence, vigour and sense of duty but they tried to atone his sins through their idolence, heedlessness, dependence on intriguing nobles and marry-making. It was a misfortune, not of the Great Mughals alone, but of India and entire Muslim community, that Aurangzib's throne came to be occupied, one after another, by weak and worthless men. As God had willed it, the very first successor of Aurangzib was just his reverse.

During the life-time of Shāh Waliullah (1114-1176/1703-1762) eleven Mughal kings ascended the throne in quick succession. These were:

1. Muhammad Mu'azzam Bahādur Shāh (with the title of Shāh 'Ālam Bahādur Shāh I).
2. Mu'iz-ud-din Jahandār Shāh.
3. Farrukhsiyar Ibn 'Azīm-us-Shān.
4. Nīkūsiyar.
5. Raf'ī-ud-Darajāt Ibn Raf'i-ul-Qadar.
6. Raf'ī-ud-Daula Ibn Raf'i-ul-Qadar.
7. Muhammad Shah Ibn Jahan Shāh.
8. Ahmad Shāh Ibn Muhammad Shāh.
9. 'Azīz-ud-din 'Ālamgīr Ibn Jahandār Shāh.
10. Muhiy-us-Sunnah b. Kam Bakhsh b. 'Ālamgir.
11. Shāh 'Ālam Ibn 'Azīz-ud-din.

Eleven kings donned the purple within a brief period of half a century: some of them ruled for ten[10] or a little less than four months[11], some were kings in name only[12], while others remained on the throne just for a few days.[13] We shall mention here the events during the reign of Shāh 'Ālam Bahādur Shāh I. Farrukh Siyar, Muhammad Shāh and Shāh Ālam II which had an impact on later developments in Indian history and the fate of Indian Muslims.

Shāh 'Ālam Bahādur Shāh I (1118-24/1707-12)

He was the eldest son of Aurangzib who ascended the throne

after defeating his brother Muhammad 'Azam. He played at cross-purposes with his father by embracing shi'ite faith which marked not only an antithesis of the state policy and faith of his father but also that of all the earlier Mughal kings, and was even against his own political interest since ninety percent of his Muslim subjects from Bengal to Kabul and Qandhar subscribed to the Sunnite creed. Ghulām Husain Tabātabāi, a Shi'ite historian, has spoken of Bahādur Shāh's, acceptance of the Shia faith, his indulgence in polemics with the Sunni religious scholars, ordering a public profession of 'Ali being the only rightful successor of the Prophet in Friday sermons at Lahore and the edict causing a tumult among the people. He sums up the failure of Bahādur Shāh in these words:

> "The king continued to insist on and to propagate Shi'ite beliefs, kept on discussing the matter with the religious scholars but nothing came out of his endeavours."[14]

The result was that the Muslim masses and army, drawn mostly from the Sunnites, gradually lost the zeal with which they had always supported on Mughals The change in state policy has been marked by non-Muslim historians also. Dr. Satish Chandra writes in the *Party and Politics at the Mughal Court* that "in the realm of policy, the association of the state with religious orthodoxy was considerably weakened."[15] The softness of Bahadur Shāh's fibre prevented him from asserting his will in any matter. According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar "he was incapable of saying no to anybody, and his only idea of statesmanship was to let matters drift and patch up a temporary peace by humouring everybody, without facing issues and saving future trouble by making decisions promptly and courageously."[16] It was during his reign that intrigues began to increase in the court along with the realisation that he was too weak to suppress them. Still the traditions of the dignity of the empire were maintained.

According to Khafi Khān very few monarchs of the times past were equal to Bahādur Shāh in extenuation of faults and forgiveness of offences but such complacency and negligence were

exhibited in the protection of the state and in the management of the country and its government that witty sarcastic people found the date of his accession in the words: *Shāh-i-bekhabar* (the Heedless King).[17]

Tabātabāi, Zakāullah and several other historians state that Bahādur Shāh had grown superstitious towards the end of his life.[18] He died on 19th Muharram 1124/27th February, 1712 reducing the great Mughal Empire within six years of rule, to an state of impotency and bankruptcy.

Farrukh Siyar (**1125-31/1713-19**)

The Sayyid Brothers Hasan 'Ali (afterwards titled as 'Abdullah Khān Qutub-ul-Mulk) and Husain 'Ali (afterwards Amīr-ul-Umrā-Firūz Jang), who were destined to be remembered in Indian history as the king-makers and the worst examples of royal ingratitude, completely dominated Farrukh Siyar. According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar "Farrukh Siyar was utterly thoughtless, fickle and weak, and devoid of constancy of fidelity to his own promises. Like all weak men he was swayed by the latest adviser, and having resolved to do a thing could never hold it long but soon sank into despair and went back on his undertakings. Constitutionally incapable of governing by his own will and controlling others, he would not trust any able agent, but was easily inspired by a childish suspicion of his ministers and induced to enter into plots for their overthrow. But his cowardice and fickleness made it impossible for any plot to succeed under his leadership, and his instigators had to suffer from vengeance of the fruitlessly offended ministers."[19]

All the state affairs passed into the hands of subordinates. A *bania* (grocer) named Ratan Chand who used to look after Sayyid 'Abdullah's private estates, abused his influence over the sleeply minister to extort large bribes from office seekers as the price of issuing letters of appointment under the imperial seal. He also used to lease the collection of revenue to the highest bidder resulting in rack-renting and the ruine of agriculture. For seven years the State was in a condition of unstable equilib-

rium, and it is not too much to say that Farrukh Siyar prepared for himself the fate which finally overtook him. At last, sickened by constant plotting of Farrukh Siyar, the Sayyid Brothers dragged him down from his throne, bare-headed and bare-footed, and subjected him every moment to blows and vilest abuse. He was imprisoned, starved, blinded, poisoned and strangled to death. The successors of the Great Mughals lost the prestige and the regard their predecessors had enjoyed in the masses.

Muhammad Shāh (**1131-1161/1719-48**)

Muhammad Shāh occupied the throne for 29 years and 6 months. His reign was a chapter of accidents. It was during his rule that Nādir Shāh invaded India in 1739. Sayyid Brothers had put Muhammad Shāh on the throne and exercised complete domination over him. They were responsible for the abolition of the *jizya* and a appeasing policy towards the Rajputs. They appointed Raja Ratan Chand as Diwan. They were also responsible for formation of a Hindustani Party which included both Hindus and Muslims. The Rajput were the strongest supporters of the Sayyid Brothers on account of their policy of reconciliation.[20] They had rendered the emperor powerless and encouraged Hindus to construct temples and raise objection to the slaughter of cows.[21] Ratan Chand, the Diwan of 'Abdullah Khān and his agents abused the authority usurped by the Sayyid Brothers.

Muhammad Shāh was "a lover of pleasure and indolence, negligent of political duties, and addicted to loose habits, but of a somewhat generous disposition. He was entirely careless regarding his subjects......In a short time, many of the officers of the kingdom put out their feet from the path of obedience to the sovereign, and many of the infidels, rebels, tyrants and enemies stretched out the hands of rapacity and extortion upon the weaker tributaries and the poor subjects."[22]

Nizam-ul-Mulk Āsaf Jāh was the only noble who was loyal to the throne and possessed the courage and ability to arrest the decay of the Mughals but he could do little because of the

jealousy of the Iranian faction, particularly the Sayyid Brothers. Despaired of rendering any useful service to the throne he went away to Deccan, leaving the emperor at the mercy of intriguers.

Muhammad Shāh neglected public business, passing his time entirely in pursuit of pleasure. Historians depict him as a lover of pleasure and indolence, negligent of political duties and entirely careless to the welfare of his subjects.[23]

The ascendancy of Sayyid Brothers was ultimately brought to an end. Husain 'Ali was killed and Hasan 'Ali ('Abdullah Khān) was made prisoner after being defeated near Agra. In 1772 he was poisoned. But the fate of Mughal empire remained unchanged as the Emperor failed to see the dangers facing him.

Vidya Dhar Mahajan writes: "It might have been expected that the disposal of the Sayyid Brothers would have strengthened the hands of Muhammad Shāh. Unfortunately that was not so. Young and handsome, and fond of all kinds of pleasures, he addicted himself to an inactive life which entirely enervated the energy of the Empire Muhammad Shāh's reign was long and there was some redeeming trait in his character. Unluckily, he did not take interest in the affairs of the state and consequences were most fatal. Province after province became independent."[24]

According to Wolseley Haig: "Muhammad Shāh demands our pity if he may not command our respect. Placed in a position which called for a genius he was a very ordinary person. Historians blame him for his devotion to pleasure rather than business, but the tragedy of his situation was that the most absolute devotion to business, by a man of his moral calibre would in no way have altered the course of events. A mere sickly puppet like Rafi-ud-Darajāt or Rafi-ud-Daula was perhaps hardly conscious of humiliation, but Muhammad Shāh appears to have realised both the hopelessness of the situation and his own powerlessness to amend it."[25]

To be brief, the empire carved out by the courage and valour of Babur and maintained by his worthy descendants, of whom the last was Aurangzib, quickly reached the doom prede-

termined for an autocracy falling in hands of incompetent and indolent rulers.

In 1151/1739 Nādir Shāh captured Lahore. From Lahore he sent to Muhammad Shāh a courteous letter reminding him that they were both of Turkish blood and warning him against his evil counsellors. Nādir's warning was received at first with ridicule, but his march towards Delhi gave way to panic which increased with every stage of the invader's advance. It is perhaps not necessary to narrate here the sack of Delhi by Nādir Shāh's army. It will suffice to say that by the time Nādir Shāh issued orders that the slaying and plundering should stop "a great part of the city was in ruins and the stench of the dead was soon intolerable. The corpses were piled in stacks and burnt, whether Hindus or Muslims, with the timber of the ruined houses."[26] Shāh Waliullah was 37 years of age at that time.

About the political situation at the court in Delhi after Nādir Shāh's departure, Dr. Satish Chandra writes: "The parties at the Mughal Court were also affected by Nādir Shāh's invasion. Among the old leaders, Sa'ādat Khān and Khān-i-Daurān died, while Nizām-ul-Mulk and Qamar-ud-din Khān forfeited the confidence of the Emperor for their sorry part in the battle of Karnal. Nizām-ul-Mulk decided once again to leave the Mughal Court to its devices and sought an agreement with the Marathas for maintaining his position in Deccan. Safdar Jang, Amir Khān, and a number of other nobles gradually rose in the Emperor's favour. The decline in the imperial prestige led to a resumption of the old struggle for *Wizarat*, with the important difference that the issue was now no longer one of revivifying the empire by internal reforms and new policies, but of preventing the Emperor from falling under the domination of either one or another of the 'powers' contending the mastery in North India."[27] The result was that three important provinces, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa fell apart from the empire under 'Ali Wardi Khān.

Muhammad Shāh fell sick of dropsy and grew rapidly worse. He died on 26th Rabi-ul-Thani, 1161/29th April, 1748 after holding the helm for 30 years and leaving the Mughal

empire at the verge of disintegration.

Shāh 'Ālam II (1173-1221/1759-1806)

Muhammād Shāh was succeeded by Ahmad Shāh (1748-54) and then by 'Ālamgir II (1754-59). Muhammad Shāh's reign had seen rapid deterioration of administration and laxity of morals among the nobles resulting in dissolution of the bonds of discipline throughout the empire, and by the time Shāh Alām II ascended the throne in 1173/1759, the Mughal rule was passing through the throes of death. Throughout his long reign, Shāh 'Alam remained a puppet in the hands of the ministers and the Marathas. After his defeat in the battle of Buxer in 1764, he gave the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the English East India Company and the latter promised to pay him an annual tribute of Rs. 26 lakhs. He also paid the price of leaning on Marathas by ceding the districts of Allahabad and Kara to them.

Even before Shāh 'Ālam assumed the role of emperor, the whole of northern India was practically at the mercy of Marathas, Jats and Sikhs. Reviewing the administrative policy of Marathas Rowlinson says: "The chief objection to be urged against the Maratha system of government is that outside their own territory, it was almost purely predatory. The Maratha was never a colonist. While away on his expeditions, his thoughts were always with his little holding in the Deccan hills, and he seldom intermarried with the people of the country. Other Hindu states took pride in improving the condition of the territory they conquered. They constructed temples, wells, canals, roads and other public works. The Marathas did nothing of this kind. Their *mulkdari* raids, by destroying the industries and wealth of the countries overrun, merely killed the goose which laid the golden eggs."[28] Jats and Sikh were no better than Marathas whose merciless plundering of the conquered territories defeated their own ends. It was then that Ahmad Shāh Abdāli crushed the power of Marathas in the battle of Panipat on January 14, 1761, thereby providing a respite to the country. Ahmad Shāh Abdāli sent for Shāh 'Ālam, deputed an emissary to invite him to

Delhi and got a letter sent to him by his mother Zeenat Mahal. Had Shāh 'Ālam been ambitious and possessed the ability to take advantage of the discomfiture of Marathas, he could have given a new lease of life to the Mughal empire after the battle of Panipat. But he possessed neither the courage nor the grit that makes man struggle with destiny. He returned to Delhi from Allahabad, but in 1772, after ten years, when the opportunity of restoring the power and authority of the Mughals had vanished. He became a puppet in the hands of intriguing nobles while Rohilas and Sikhs were dealing death blows to the empire which existed in name only. At least, Ghulām Qādir Rohila, grandson of Najib-ud-Daula, succeeded in capturing Delhi. He plundered the city, got the Mughal princes caned and brutally blinded the Emperor in 1788. Never before the Mughals had undergone such humiliation.

In 1789, Scindia paid back Ghulām Qādir Rohila in his own coin by putting him to sword and restoring the throne to Shāh 'Ālam. Scindia also fixed an annual pension of Rupees one lakh for Shāh 'Ālam who died in 1806 after occupying the throne for 47 years, out of which he ruled as a blind man for 18 years.

Intellectual and Religious Conditions

In the days of later Mughals which was marked by political uncertainty when predatory forces had plunged the whole country in lawlessness and disorder and the nobility had reached the depth of degradation there was marvellous upsurge of intellectual, educational and spiritual activity. We find in these days several masterminds who do not appear to belong to an era of decadence. These scholars have left several exquisite pieces of literary value with deep intellectual content although some of them were invalid or suffering from prolonged illness or plunged in grief for one reason or the other. Psychologists have explained such manifestations as the upsurge of suppressed ambitions and determination to overcome all odds which makes one accomplish such feats as are not possible in normal conditions. However, the religious and spiritual upsurge in that corrupt and shabby

condition of Indian society is yet another evidence of the latent power of Islam to fight in most adverse circumstances and to work miracles when the situation appears to be hopeless

We find depth of knowledge, brilliance of intellect, penmanship and pedagogic acumen in the writings of Maulana Ahmad b Abu Saeed alias Mulla Jeevan of Amethi (1047-1130/1638-1718), the author of *Nur-al-Anwar* and *Al-Tafsirat al-Ahmadiya*. Mulla Hamdullah of Sandila (d. 1160/1747) who wrote *Sharah-al-S llam* or *Biham-d-il-lah* Maulana Muhammad Hasan alias Mulla Hasan (d. 1199/1785) of Firangi Mahal, Maulana Rustam 'Ali of Kannauj (d. 1178/1763), Shaikh Sifatullah of Khairābād (d. 1157/1747), Shaikh 'Ali Asgar of Kannauj (d 1140/1727), Maulana Gulām 'Ali Āzād of Bilgram (d 1200/1786), Maulana Ghulām 'Ali Naqshband of Lucknow. (d. 1126/1714), Qazi Muhibullah of Bihar (d. 1119/1707) author of *Sallam-l-U'oom* and *Musallam-al-Thubūt*,[29] Qazi Mubarak of Gopā Mau (d. 1162/1749) author of *Sharh-Sallam* also known as *Qazi*, Maulana Muhammad Ali of Thana Bhawan, author of *Kashshāf Istalahat-al-Funūn* (a unique work of its kind) and, lastly, Mulla Nizām-ud-din of Lucknow (d. 1161/1748) who compiled the syllabus which was readily adopted by all educational institutions in India and Central Asia. These are some of the writers and teachers whose creations dominated the educational system for a hundred years or so.[30]

In the field of mysticism we find Mirza Mazhar Jān-i-Jānan (1111-1195/1699-1781), an eminent Shaikh of the Naqshbandiyah-Mujadidyah order, about whom Shāh Waliullah says "Men of his stature are never numerous, but it is strange that he happened to be present during the times of anarchy and degeneration."[31] There were several other honoured men of God belonging to other mystical orders. Syed 'Abdur Razzāq of Bānsā (d. 1136/-1724) who happened to be the spiritual guide of Mulla Nizām-ud-din of *Dars-i-Nizami* fame, represented the Qādiryah order while Shāh Kalīm Ullah Jahānābadi (d. 1140/1728) and Shāh Fakhr-uz-Zamān of Delhi (d. 1199/1785) were distinguished mentors of Chishtiyah-Nizāmiyah order. Other elevated souls of the time

were: Shaikh Shāh Muhammad Ghaus Qādri of Lahore (d. 1154/1741) of the Qādiryah order; Shaikh Muhammad 'Ābid of Sunnām (d 1160/1747), Khwaja Muhammad Nāsir 'Andalīb[32] (d. 1172/1758), Shāh Munib Ullah of Bālāpur and Shāh Nur-Muhammad of Budaun (d. 1135/1723), all belonging to the Naqshbandiyah order. Thus we find distinguished mystics of Qādiryah, Chishtiyah and Naqshbandiyah orders providing moral and spiritual guidance to the people during these days. The extraordinary convergence of such a large number of men perfect in spirit has been mentioned by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz in one of his letters in which he says:

> "During the reign of Muhammad Shāh twenty-two Shaikhs of different mystical orders happened to be present in Delhi—it is something which rarely comes about.[33]"

Social and Moral Decadence

The Muslim society, particularly its nobility, had however reached the depth of moral degeneration owing to profusion of wealth and luxury and the baneful influence exerted by the Iranian culture. The nobility had in fact been rendered totally incapable of performing the role usually played by the class in times of revolution and crisis. Their utter failure on the political and administrative fronts had actually helped to bring up men from the ranks who enabled the Mughal empire to linger on so long instead of collapsing suddenly. Enumerating the causes of the downfall of Mughal empire, Vidyadhar Mahājan writes in the *Muslim Rule in India* about the Mughal nobles of the later period.

> "Too much of wealth, luxury and leisure softened their character. Their harems became full. They got wine in plenty. They went in palanquins to the battlefield. Such nobles were not fit to fight against the Marathas, the Rajputs and the Sikhs. The Mughal nobility degenrated at a very rapid pace. According to J. N. Sarkar, no Mughal noble family retained its importance for more than one or two generations."[34]

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz has given some examples of the luxurious living of Mughal nobles. He writes in one of his letters :

> "The women in the house of Nawab Qamar-uddin Khān used to conclude their bath with a dip in rose-water. The expenditure on *pan* leaves and flowers purchased for the women folk of another noble amounted to Rupees three hundred."[35]

Another historian Ghulām 'Ali Āzad, author of *Ma'āthir-al-Kirām*, says:

> "It was commonly known and stated by the people in Aurangābād that quite a large number of persons never cooked food in their own houses during the time of Amīr-ul-Umra (Husain 'Ali Khān). The cooks of the Amīr-ul-Umra used to sell their share of victuals with the result that highly rich pilau could be purchased for a few paisas."[36]

Unsound Creeds and Practices

Unorthodox creeds and polytheistic practices disregarding the divine command to make religion exclusive for God had been taken over by the Muslims from the polytheists and Shi'ites, which were, to say the least, more dangerous for the Muslim society than their social and moral degeneration. These customs and usages were undermining the strength of the Muslims and making them ineligible for divine succour. A number of these practices were blatantly irreligious or polytheistic in character and quite unpardonable. Divine honours were paid to the graves of the saints, prostration was common before the so-called spiritual guides, shrines were venerated and bedecked with costly bed-sheets and flowers, oblations were offered for one's ancestors, fairs were held in grave-yards and musical concerts were held to honour the departed saints taken as guardian spirits in every part of the country. Exotic beliefs and customs such as celebration of festivals with processions, sacrifices to propitiate the demon spirits like Shaikh Saddo, participation in devotions to different gods and goddesses and keeping fasts in the name of saints

for invoking their aid in times of need smacked disbelief in the absolute overlordship of God, while names like 'Ali Bakhsh, Husain Bakhsh, Pīr Bakhsh or Sālār Baksh were indicative of the popular superstition that godly souls enjoyed powers to bestow favours on behalf of God.

The doctrine of *tauhid*, Oneness of God, had come to acquire a peculiar, restricted connotation: that God was undoubtedly the Creator and Lord of Universe but He had delegated His authority to the saints and godly souls who distributed favours on His behalf or acted as intercessors between God and man. *Shirk* or ascribing partners to God had been restricted to association of anything with God as the Creator and Lord of the universe, or prostration before any created being with the intention of worshipping it.

In short, Muslim India was not only passing through a social and political degeneration, it was also exposed to an acute moral and spiritual corruption which perhaps marked the debasement of the Muslim society to its lowest level. Syed Sulaimān Nadwi has vividly depicted the hopless situation then confronting the Indian Muslim society in one of his articles in this manner:

> "The Mughal Empire was about to collapse. Exotic beliefs and practice and innovations in matters of religion were common among the Muslims; impious shaikh and faqirs had turned the shrines of the saints into purple seats for beguiling the over-credulous masses; the teachers and the taught were busy in debating the moot points of logic and philosophy; legal niceties dominated the thought of every jurisconsult; search into principles of jurisprudence for an analogical deducation not attempted by the doctors of old was an unpardonable sin; and even those who were deemed to be learned, let alone the commoners, had hardly an inkling of the underlying wisdom of Quranic injunctions or the commandments of the *ahādith* and *fiqh*."[17]

Notes and References :

1. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, Delhi 1971, p. 316.
2. *Cambridge History of the World*, Delhi, 1970, p. 175.
3. For details see *Ma'āthir 'Ālamgīri*, (Calcutta 1871) by Muhammad Sāqi Musta'id Khān ; *Dr. Barnier's Travel of India*.
4. See *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. III, pp. 281-91.
5. For an estimate of Aurangzib's character see Stanly Lane-Pool's *Aurangzib*, Zahir-ud-din Farūqi's *Aurangzib and His Age*, Jadunath Sirkar's *History of Aurangzib* and Shibli Nomāni's articles on Aurangzib.
6. The compilation is known in these countries as *Al-Fatāwā-i-Hindiyan*.
7. Stanley Lane-Poole, *Aurangzib*, Bombay, 1964, p. 79.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
9. *Ibid., op. cit.*, p. 84.
10. Mu'iz-ud-din Jahāndār Shāh (1712-13).
11. Raf'i-ud-Darajāt (from 28th February to 4th June 1719).
12. Raf'i-ud-Daulā (He was a puppet in the hands of the Sayyid Brothers).
13. Muhi-us-Sunnah (November 1759).
14. *Siyarul Mutākhirīn*, Vol. II, p. 381 ; Cambridge History of India, *op. cit.*, Vol., IV, p. 324.
15. Dr. Satish Chandra, *Party and Politics at the Mughal Court*, 1077-40, Aligarh, 1959, p. 60.
16. *Cambridge History of India, op. cit.*, Vol., IV, p. 324.
17. V. D. Mahajan, *Muslim Rule in India*, Delhi, 1970, Pt. II, p. 321.
18. S. Ghulam Husain Tabatabai, *Siyar-ul-Mutākhirīn* (Calcutta 1902) pp. 381-82 ; Zaka Ullah, *Tārikh Hindustān*, Vol. IX, p. 33.
19. *Cambridge History of India, op. cit.* p. 332.
20. *Muslim Rule in India, op. cit.*, Part II, p. 328.
21. Zakā-ullah, *Tārikh Hindustān*, Vol. IX, p. 166.
22. Rustam 'Ali *Tarikh Hind*, cited in *Muslim Rule in India, op. cit.*, Vol. II, p, 328.
23. *Muslim Rule in India, op. cit.*, Pt. II, p. 328.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 328.

25. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, pp. 373-74.
26. *Ibid*. p. 362
27. *Party and Politics at the Mughal Court*, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-55.
28. *The Cambridge History of India*, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, pp. 414-15.
29. Both these works were studied and their commentaries written in India and Egypt during the subsequent one hundered years.
30. Hakim S. 'Abdul Hai, *Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol. VI.
31. *Kalamāt-i-Tayyabāt*, p. 65.
32. Father of famous Urdu poet, Khwaja Mir Dard.
33. *Malfuzat-i-'Azīzi*, p. 108.
34. *Muslim Rule in India*, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, p. 343.
35. *Malfuzāt-i-'Azīzi*,
36. *Ma'āthir-al-Kirām* Vol. I, p. 170.
37. *Maqalāt-i-Sulaimāni* p. 44.

III

Ancestors of Shah Waliullah

Forefathers of the Shāh

Little details are available about the earliest forbears of Shāh Waliullah except that Shaikh Shams-ud-din Mufti had taken up residence in Rohtak. This was the time when biographical accounts were seldom written. We find, during the period, mostly the reminiscences and table-talks of the spiritual guides amongst which the *Siyar al-Aulia* of Khwāja Mīr Khurd about the eminent sufi Shaikh Khwāja Nizām-ud-dīn Aulia is the most celebrated. Two other works written during the time, which achieved considerable fame, were *Gulzār-i-Abrār* by Shāh Muhammad b. Hasan Ghausi of Mandwa and *Akhbār-al-Akhyār* by Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith of Delhi. The former dealt with the saints and scholars of Mandwa and Malwa. These works normally described the lives and achievements of eminent personalities living in the metropolitan cities, the capitals of the central or regional kingdoms and hardly mentioned anything about others unless anyone was the founder of any mystical order. Shāh Waliullah's forefathers lived in Rohtak, a back country town from the time of Shaikh Shams-ud-din Mufti to his grand father Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din, with the result that they hardly attracted the attention of any writer.

This chapter would have remained blank presenting an insurmountable difficulty for his biographers if Shāh Waliullah

had himself not written a small pamphlet about his ancestors, under the name of *Imdād fi Ma'āthar al-Ajdād*.[1] It contains a sketchy reference to his forefathers with a bit detailed description of Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din. Hāfiz Muhammad Rahīm Bakhsh has expanded these details with the help of other contemporary historical and biographical writings to cover 113 pages of *Hayāt-i-Walī*, but as he has omitted the sources used by him, we have to rely only on *Ma'āthar al-Ajdād* in our account.

Genealogical Table

Shāh Waliullah, a direct descendant of Caliph Umar, has given his genealogical table tracing his ancestory back to the second Caliph. The first among his ancestors to take up residence at Rohtak was Shams-ud-din Mufti. This is confirmed by the genealogical table maintained by the descendants of Salār Hosām-ud-din, a brother of Shams-ud-din Mufti. The table as given by Shāh Waliullah is as under:

Shāh Waliullah b. As-Shaikh 'Abdur Rahīm b. As-Shahīd Wajīh-ud-din b. Mo'azzam b. Mansūr b. Ahmad b. Mahmūd b. Qawām-ud-din alias Qāzi Qāzan b. Qāzi Qāsim b. Qāzi Kabīr alias Qāzi Budh b. 'Abdul Malik b. Qutb-ud-din b. Kamāl-ud-din b. Shams-ud-din Mufti b. Sher Malik b. Muhammad 'Atā Malik b. Abdul Fath Malik b. 'Umar Hākim Malik b. 'Adil Malik b. Farūq b. Jirjīs b. Ahmad b. Muhammad Shahryār b. 'Uthmān b. Māhān b. Humāyūn b. Quraysh b. Sulaimān b. 'Affān b. 'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. 'Abdullah b. 'Umar b. Al-Khattāb.

The table includes several names with the appellation Malik. Shāh Waliullah has stated that it was a honorific title suffixed with the proper names like Khān during his own time.

Migration to India

As Shāh Waliullah has stated Shaikh Shams-ud-din Mufti was first among his ancestors who migrated to India and took up residence at Rohtak. It appears from the intervening links between Shāh Waliullah and Shaikh Shams-ud-din Mufti that the latter must have emigrated to India by the end of the seventh

century or in the initial decades of the eighth century of Islamic era. This was the time when the Mongols had laid waste a greater part of the eastern part of the Islamic world and sacked and plundered great many cities of Iran and Turkistan. *Tārikh Firoz Shāhi* and other contemporary writings show that there had been a huge influx of educated and cultured families of these areas into India then ruled by the Turks. These Indian rulers of Turkish descent welcomed the emigrants, successfully repulsed the onslaught of Mongols and patronised the centres of arts and learning and spiritual guidance which had come into existence with the influx of refugees from Central Asia.[2] Their enlightened policy in this regard had helped in efflorescence of culture, arts and education as well as spiritual guidance of the masses throughout the Sultanate.

In Rohtak

It seems that Rohtak was then a flourishing urban centre on way to Delhi from the west and served as the first destination of in-coming emigrants. Shāh Waliullah says that the city had a dominant Islamic setting owning to the influence of Qurayshite families which had taken up residence there. Shaikh Shams-uddin also contributed to Islamisation of the city; for, as Shāh Waliullah relates, several miraculous deeds are attributed to him. There is nothing to cast any doubt about these descriptions since Shams-ud-din Qāzi was a man perfect in spirit and pure of heart. Normally, the state entrusted the charge of the city and the offices of Qāzi and Muhtasib to the most learned person in any city in those days, although he was not formally known by his official designation.

From Shams-ud-din Mufti to Shaikh Wajih-ud-din

Kamāl-ud-din Mufti, the eldest son of Shaikh Shams-ud-din Mufti discharged the official duties entrusted to his father which later on fell to the charge of his son and grandson, Qutb-ud-din and 'Abdul Malik. Qāzi Budh, son of 'Abdul Malik, was formally appointed Qāzi of city, as the post had been created by

that time. Qāzi Budh had two sons; one by a wife from a Siddiqi family of Rohtak and the other by another one from a Saiyid family of Sonipat. The latter, Shaikh Mahmūd, who resigned from the office of Qāzi to take up another appointment under the Sultanate, had a son named Shaikh Ahmad. While still a lad, Shaikh Ahmad migrated to Sonipat where he took up residence with Shaikh 'Abdul Ghani b. Shaikh 'Abdul Hakīm who later on married his daughter to Shaikh Ahmad. Subsequently he came back to Rohtak again and got a house built for him outside the fort of Rohtak. His son Shaikh Mansūr is reported to be a man of parts possessing courage and administrative capacity. The first wife of Shaikh Mansūr was the daughter of Shaikh 'Abdullah b. Shaikh 'Abdul Ghani who bore him a son named Shaikh Mu'azzam. He was also known for his gallantry of which several feats are reported. Once Shaikh Mansūr had to fight a battle with a Raja. Shaikh Mu'azzam, as related by Shāh Waliullah on the authority of his father Shaikh 'Abdur Rahīm, was given the charge of the right flank of the army although he was then only twelve years of age. A hot battle ensued and large number of troops were killed on both sides. As the battle was raging in full fury Shaikh Mu'azzam received the news that his father had been killed which meant the defeat of his side. Thereupon Shaikh Mu'azzam pounced upon the enemy with dauntless courage, killed whoever came up against him and made straight for the Raja. An experienced and brave commander of the Raja tried to check his advance but he was dealt a deathblow. The enemy troops immediately hemmed around Shaikh Mu'azzam who had to get down from his horse. The Raja, however, forbade his troops to make a set at Shaikh Mu'azzam saying that he was surprised at the valour of that lad. The Raja kissed the hands of Shaikh Mu'azzam and asked for the reason of his desperate action. On being told by Shaikh Mu'azzam that he had vowed to fight until death since his father had been killed, the Raja assured him that his father was alive and sent word to Shaikh Mansūr that he was prepared to make peace for the sake of that young man.

Shāh Waliullah also relates from his father that once a band of thirty bandits decamped with the beasts of village Shikohpūr held in fief by Shaikh Mu'azzam. The news was conveyed to him when he had sat down to take his meals. After taking the food, he took only one guide with him, forbidding others to accompany him, and pursued the robbers on his horse. When the fleeing looters came into his sight, he challenged them to face him. He shot volleys of bowshot at them with such a lightning speed that they surrendered to him by throwing away their arms and called the heaven to witness that they would never attempt again at cattle lifting from that village.

Married to the daughter of Saiyid Nūr-ul-Jabbār of Sonipat, Shaikh Mu'azzam had three sons: Shaikh Jamāl, Shaikh Fīroz and Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din. The last mentioned was the grand-father of Shāh Waliullah.

Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din Shahīd

Shāh Waliullah has given a bit detailed account of his grandfather Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din. He says that Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din was a man of courage as well as known for his piety. He used always to recite two parts of the holy Qurān every day and never missed the same whether he was in his house or out on excursion. In old age, when his eye-sight had become weak, he used always to keep a copy of the Qurān written in bold letters. When riding a horse, he never allowed it to enter a cultivated field even if others had trampled the cultivation. He always took a circuitous route on such occasions. During military operations when his comrades forcibly took hold of the farmers' live-stock in times of scarcity, he preferred to go hungry than to follow their practice. Shāh Waliullah's father relates that Shaikh Wajih-ud-din was always courteous and kind to his servants and poor vendors who approached him with their wares. In one of his travels he felt the urge to betake the path of spirit; searched for a pure-hearted soul, took oath of fealty to him and applied himself to mystical exercises assiduously.

Shah Waliullah relates that his father very often spoke of the

intrepidity of Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din. He has also mentioned several instances of his bravery when he had alone faced several persons in the combats. Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din had accompanied the royal army in its campaigns of Malwa and saved, on occasions, his comrades or officers who had been hemmed in by the enemy troops. Once he defeated three militant combatants singlehandedly. He is reported to be an adept in martial arts.[3]

During the war of succession following Shāh Jahān's illness, Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din was with Aurangzib. When Shāh Shuj'a raised the standard of revolt in Bengal, his cool courage and brave charge on the enemy ranks in an hour of crises swept away the enemy.[4] His valour was appreciated by Aurangzib who desired to promote him to a higher rank, but Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din declined to accept any reward. On several occasions he came to the rescue of his friends, exposing himself to danger, with exemplary courage and determination.[5] Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm is reported to have narrated several incidents of his father's intrepidity as well as assistance rendered to the poor and needy.

Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din took the daughter of Shaikh Raf'ī-ud-din Muhammad b. Qutb-ul-'Ālam as his wife. Shaikh Qutb-ul-'Ālam was the son of a noted mystic Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz Shakarbār.[6] The three sons of Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din were Shaikh 'Abdur Razā Muhammad, Shaikh 'Abdur Rahīm and Shaikh 'Abdul Hakīm.

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm says that once his father remained so long in the state of prostration during the *tahajjud* (mid-night) prayer, that he feared whether his father had passed away. On being asked the reason for it, Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din explained that he was in a state of transport during which he had come to know the merits of martyrdom. He also said that he had beseeched God for being granted an opportunity to lay down his life in His way and ultimately an indication was given that he would achieve his heart's desire in Deccan. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm further relates that although his father had, by that time, given up active service and was almost averse to joining a military

expedition any more, he purchased a horse, made preparations for the journey and set out for Deccan. He thought that he would achieve his goal at Sewārā, an independent kingdom beyond the limits of Mughal empire, whose ruler had once brutally treated a Qāzi. When he reached Burhānpūr, he had the premonition that he had gone ahead of the place of martyrdom indicated to him, so he retraced his steps On the way back he took the company of certain merchants for they appeared to be religious-minded. He had thoughts about returning to his home after reaching Handia town where the party came across an old and frightened wayfarer who told them that he wanted to go to Delhi. Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din asked him to take his company and also offered to meet his expenses. The man turned out to be a spy of the marauders as he broke the news of the stay of merchants to his colleagues. A band of looters raided the *sirā'i* where Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din was busy reciting the Qur'ān. A few of the robbers asked Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din who he was and then told him that they had nothing to do with him but they would not spare the merchants. Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din, however, offered resistance to the robbers and got twenty-two wounds in the combat with them. He died fighting and reciting *takbīr*. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm also says that he had a divination of the event but was forbidden to bring back the dead body of his father.

Shaikh Muhammad of Phulat

Shaikh Muhammad[7] of Phulat was the maternal grandfather of Shāh Waliullah. His forefathers were first settled in Siddhaur[8] but had taken up residence at Phulat during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi. Son of Shaikh Muhammad 'Aqīl, Shaikh Muhammad showed the signs of brilliance from his childhood. Shaikh Jalāl, a spiritual successor of Saiyid Ādam Binnauri had predicted, just after he was born, that he was to become an elevated soul. He was initially educated by Shaikh 'Abdul Razā Muhammad, an uncle of Shāh Waliullah, and then completed his education under Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm. He returned to Phulat

after completing his education and devoted himself to spiritual exercises. Shaikh Muhammad was witty, generous, self-denying and extremely pious. He exterted a morally salutary influence on whoever happened to meet him. Shāh Waliullah has narrated several incidents of Shaikh Muhammad's love and regard for his mentor Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm,[9] who had permitted Shaikh Muhammad to enlist disciples for spiritual training. Shaikh Muhammad's son Shaikh 'Ubaidullah, the maternal uncle of Shāh Waliullah, had given his daughter in marriage to the Shāh. Shaikh Muhammad 'Āshiq,[10] the son of Shaikh 'Ubaidullah, was a spiritual successor of Shāh Waliullah, who had also attained perfection of spirit[11]. Shaikh Muhammad died on the 8th Jamadi-ul-Akhir, 1125/21st June, 1713.[12]

Shaikh Abul Razā Muhammad

Shaikh Abul Razā, the eldest son of Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din and uncle of Shāh Waliullah, has been given a prominent place in the *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn* and described by the Shāh as the *Imām al-Tarīqah wal-Haqīqah* (leader of the spiritual path and truth). He received conventional education under different teachers, but attained the higher degrees of absolute certainly through his own intuition. When still a youngman he joined the company of a grandee with the permission of his father, but suddenly broke that association to lead a life of self-contentment and absolute reliance on God in order to follow the holy Prophet's precepts. He was so zealous of acting on the Quranic dictum: *If you desire this world's life and adornment, come! I will content you and release you with a fair release,*[13] that he asked his wife either to lead a frugal life with him or go back to her father. She preferred to brave the difficulties with him like the wives of the holy Prophet, rather than to be separated from him. It is related that he had often to bear the pangs of hunger for several days consecutively. Having a special regard for 'Abdul Qādir Jīlani, he felt an intense attachment to Caliph 'Ali.[14] Aurangzib expressed the wish, on several occasions, to call upon Shaikh 'Abul Razā Muhammad, but he never agreed to meet the

Emperor. He was averse to nobility, but extremely courteous to the poor artisans and labourers, and accepted their gifts even if these were a few paisas.

Shāh Waliullah describes him as a colossus of knowledge, silver-tongued orator and holy-minded gnostic. He was tall, of fair complexion with delicate features and his beard was scanty. Soft-spoken, he used to deliever sermons after Friday prayers in which he normally narrated three *ahādith*, rendered them into Persian or the local dialect and then briefly explained their significance. He used to teach one book on each of the disciplines of Islamics, but later on confined himself to lectures on *Baidāwi* and *Mishkāt* only. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of *Wahdat-ul-Wajūd* of which he is reported to have had personal experience. He was also an expert in explaining difficult points in the aphorisms of earlier mystics. Also, reported to be one of those whose prayers were readily answered, the Shāh has cited a number of instances illustrating his holiness[15] and the miracles worked by him. He was extremely careful in following the *sunnah* of the holy Prophet. Often he used to recite devotional verses of Hindi poets. He died sometimes when his age was between fifty and sixty years, on the 17th Muharram 1101/26th May, 1689 after he had performed the *'asr* prayers. The word *āftāb* (sun) gives the year of his death.

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm

Shāh Waliullah has described the spiritual perfection and attainments of his father Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm in the *Buwāriq-al-Wilāyah*. commonly known as *Anfās-al-Ārifīn*.[16] There are few biographies of a talented father written by his worthy son: one such work was *Tabaqāt-al-Shāf'iyah al-Kubra* by Shaikh Taj-ud-din as-Subki giving the biographical accounts of his father Shaikh Taqi-ud-din as-Subki and another is *Hasaratul Ā'lām Biwāfati Marj'e-al-Ālam*, a biography of 'Abdul Hakīm by his son 'Abdul Hai of Firangi Mahal.

We have presented here only those events and attainments of Shāh Abdur Rahīm which throw light on his personality as well

as his gifts of intellectual religious and spiritual felicity, since these would have moulded the aptitude of Shāh Waliullah. We have omitted most of his spiritual experiences and events relating to miraculous performances, although germane to the time we are speaking of and even to the genius of Shāh Waliullah himself, for the simple reason that these would be difficult to be appreciated by the people now-a-days. It would suffice to mention here that his piety and godliness recalls to mind the saints of the time past, who had attained the inward and outward perfection illustrating the Divine bounty thus stated in the Qurān: *Each day His is an affair new,*[17] and *each do We supply, both these and those, from the bounty of thy Lord. And the bounty of thy Lord can never be walled up.*[18]

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm's maternal grandfather, Shaikh Raf'ī-ud-din was a pious soul who had distributed his estates and effects among his heirs during his life-time. The mother of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was the youngest among the children of Shaikh Raf'i-ud-din who was then still unmarried. Instead of bequeathing any property to her Shaikh Raf'ī-ud-din gave her the aphorisms and ancestral tables of his spiritual guides. When it was pointed out to him that the girl required something by way of dowry rather than those writings, Shaikh Raf'ī-ud-din gave the reply: "I have inherited these from my ancestors. She will give birth to a son who would deserve this patrimony. As for her dowry, Allah will provide it, not I". Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm relates that his grandmother handed over those papers to him when he had become old enough to read them.[19]

The birth-date of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm has not been mentioned anywhere. However, since he died in 1131/1719 at the age of seventy-seven years, he should have been born in the year 1054/1644.

As steated earlier, Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm had two more brothers Shaikh 'Abul Razā and Shaikh 'Abdul Hakīm.

"I used to sport a turban when I was still a teenager," says Shāh Abdur Rahīm, "and sit in a reverential position like the elders. I used to wash myself thoroughly in performing the

ablution, abiding by all the requirements of the *sunnah*. My uncle Shaikh 'Abdul Hai, who was a pious man used to watch me with satisfaction and remark that he was glad that the traditions of his family would be maintained by me. He used to say, "What does it matter if my maternal offsprings inherit this patrimony instead of the paternal ones?"[20]

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was religious-minded from his youthful days and indifferent to the affairs worldly. If one of his elders advised him to do anything that promised material well-being, he used to say in reply that he did not need it Khwaja Hāshim, a Shaikh of Naqshbandiyah order belonging to Bukhara who had taken up residence near his house, marked the inclination of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm and advised him to scribe the Divine names several hundred times every day.[21] Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm, as he related later on, took the suggestion so seriously that once while he was making a copy of the commentary of Mulla 'Abdul Hakīm on the *Sharh 'Aqā'd*, he wrote down the names of God on several pages unintentionally.[22]

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm called upon Shaikh 'Abdullah also known as Khwaja Khurd, the son of Khwaja Bāqi Billah in order to swear allegiance to him for spiritual guidance. Khwaja Khurd, however, advised him to seek out one of the spiritual successors of Saiyid Ādam Binnauri. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm thereupon enquired if Hāfiz Saiyid 'Abdullah,[23] who lived near his house, would be suitable? Khwaja Khurd approved the suggestion and thus Shāh 'Abdur Rahim came to enlist himself as a disciple of Hāfiz Saiyid 'Abdullah. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm says that he used to keep the company of both these godly persons although the Hāfiz used to pay more attention to his spiritual guidance. Once the Hāfiz told Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm, "When you were still a youngster playing with other children, I happened to see you. I felt attracted to you and prayed God to make you one of the elects through me. Thanks God that He has answered my prayer."[24]

Education

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm studied *Sharh 'Aqāid Hāshiya-i-Khiyāli*

and other preliminary text-books under his elder brother Abul Raza Muhammad. He received instruction in the *Sharh-i-Ma wāqif* and other books of *us l* from Mirza Zāhid Harwi who paid special attention to coach him. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm says that if he ever asked Mirza Zāhid not to continue the lesson as he had not made the required preparation, he would insist that the Shāh should go over a line or two in order to avoid missing the lesson that day. The Shāh also says that Khwaja Khurd satisfactorily explained to him some of the difficult passages of the *Hāshiya-i-Khiyāli* and taught him parts of certain other books so thoroughly that he was able to understand the rest of it by himself. Khwaja Khurd had not only received instruction from Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm's maternal grand-father Shaikh Raf'i-ud-din but had also been his disciple in the spiritual discipline, and hence he was very considerate and careful in teaching the Shāh.

After the death of Saiyid 'Abdullah the Shāh turned to Khalifa Shaikh 'Abul Qāsim[25] of Akbarābād, a man of marked spiritual insight belonging to the Abul 'Alāiya Ahrāriya order. and then to 'Amir Nur-ul-'Alā. Khalifa Abul Qāsim even allowed Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm to impart spiritual guidance to others according to his school. The Khalifa used to treat Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm with a special regard since one of the Shāh's maternal forefathers, Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz Shakarbar, had been his spiritual guide.

Shāh Waliullah has described in the *Anfās-al-Ārifīn* the communions of his father along with a number of other men known for their spiritual insight.[26] It was an age of faith and spirituality when mystic disciplines flourished in every region of the Muslim world. Shāh Waliullah has accordingly narrated several events illustrating the intensity and range of the spiritual power commanded by his father[27] as well the miracles worked by him.[28] He has also given the aphorisms[29], of his father which reveal the depth of his knowledge, insight and divine afflatus.

Shāh Waliullah reports that his father normaly followed the Hanafite canon but in certain particular matters he used to act on his own understanding of the *hadith* or in accordance

with the dictates of other juristic schools. Such exceptions included recitation of the *sūrah Fātiha* in congregational prayers and in funeral services.

The influence exerted by the companionship and spiritual guidance of Khwaja Khurd on Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm, while he was still a young man, as well the instruction received by him from Khwaja 'Abdul Qāsim Akbarabadi (whose spiritual link reached Khwaja 'Ubaid Ullah Ahrār through a chain other than that of Mujaddid Alf Thāni and Khwaja Bāqi Billāh and other precursors of that order) and Amīr Nūr-ul-'Alā b. Amīr 'Abul 'Alā Akbarābadi, had made him inclined to the doctrine of *Tauhīd Wajūdi* or the Unity of Being. Khwāja Bāqi Billāh had also been a follower of that doctrine for a long time and it is difficult to say whether he had repudiated it later on or not. Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz Shakarbār (d. 975/1567), one of his forefathers on the maternal side, had also been predisposed to the *Tauhīd-i-Wajūdī*. All these factors had led Shaikh 'Abdur Rahīm to be swayed by that doctrine and to show greater reverence to Shaikh Abkar and his teachings but he never deviated in the least from the way of *shariah*.[30]

Shah Waliullah says that his father used to mention Shaikh Muhi-ud-din Ibn 'Arabi respectfully and often remarked that he could deliver lectures to expound *Fasūs-al-Hikam* of the Shaikh Akbar and illustrate its contents with the help of Quranic verses and sayings of the holy Prophet in such a way that no doubt about their authenticity would be left in any mind. But, as he added, he desisted from it since he feared that most of the people would not be able to understand them and would be led astray to unorthodoxy and irreligiousness.

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was one of the scholars selected for the compilation of *Fatāwah 'Ālamgīri*. This monumental code of Islamic law was compiled under the supervision of Shaikh Nizām-ud-din of Burhānpūr, under the orders of Aurangzib 'Ālamgīr, at a cost of rupees two lakhs.[31] Syed 'Abdul Hai has given the names of its compilers in the *Al-Thaqāfat al-Islāmiyah-fil-Hind*. There were twenty-one compilers, one of whom was

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm[32]

Shāh Waliullah writes in the *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn* that Aurangzib took keen interest in the preparation of the *Fatāwah*. Mulla Nizām-ud-din used to read one page of it daily before the Emperor. One day he read the portion compiled by Mulla Hāmid wherein the issue being discussed had rather become complex owing to the contrasting rulings drawn from two juristic works. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm had earlier seen this portion and finding it involved, had commented on the margin that "the scribe not being clear about it had made it more complicated, the correct view is that......"

While reading that portion before the Emperor, Mulla Nizām-ud-din recited the comment of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm also. Since Aurangzib was always very attentive while listening to the book, he immediately asked, "What is this?" Mulla Nizām-ud-din excused himself by saying that he would further study it and let the Emperor know about it on the following day. Mulla Nizām-ud-din expressed his dissatisfaction to Mulla Hāmid saying that it was because of his undue self-confidence that he had to cut a sorry figure before the Emperor. Mulla Hāmid thereupon charged Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm for causing the ugly situation to arise, but the Shāh maintained his stand and explained the contradiction involved in the citations made by Mulla Hāmid. The matter ended there, but it gave rise to jealousy against the Shāh among his colleagues. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm, therefore, resigned from the Board of Compilers.[33]

Character and Habits

Shāh Waliullah writes that Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was polite in disposition and spotless in character. He was courageous, prudent and self-respecting. Vigilant of the world to come, he was also not heedless of the worldly affairs, but he always chose the path of moderation in every matter. In his litanies and prayers, he was neither excessive like the ascetics nor he turned away from any religious obligation like the indolents. He was never fastidious about his dress and wore whatever was available,

but he was always seen in neat and tidy raiment. He hardly ever went to the market for making purchases nor paid a visit to any grandee or noble. If, however, anyone of them came to see him, he received him courteously and showed him due deference. If such a visitor asked for advice, he offered him counsel in a seemly manner asking him to do the right and avoid the wrong. The Shāh rendered honour to the learned and avoided the company of igorants. He was also extremely careful to follow the practice of the holy Prophet in every matter. He never missed any congregational prayer unless it became impossible to do so, nor showed any inclination towards the things impermissible. He was not averse to engage himself in mundane chores, if a need arose. He led a simple life, neither gave himself airs like certain scholars, nor was heedless of etiquette as was usually the case with mystics and friars. He took a loan only when it was absolutely necessary for he disliked borrowing for maintaining a higher standard of living. He often forbade others to do so.

His practice was to recite *darūd* one thousand times, *nafi athbāt* (negation of existence) a thousand times and the Divine Names twelve thousand times every day. He had taken up delivering sermons based on the *Mishkāt*, *Tanbīh-al-Ghafilīn* and *Ghaniyāt-al-Tālibīn* after the death of his brother Shaikh 'Abul Razā. Towards the end of his life he had started writing a commentary of the Quranic verses but it had to be discontinued by the time he had completed the exegesis of the *Sūrat-al-Baqarah* and *Sūrat-ul-Imrān* owing to his declining health.

Religious Zeal

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm had inherited his family traditions of courage and valour as well as the zeal for religion. His father had died fighting bravely while his forefathers had been valiant combatants. He did not have an occasion to show his valour in any battle yet several incidents have been related in the *Anfās-al-Ārifīn* which go to show that he was bold and fearless, possessed the quality of fortitude and had an ardent passion for the religion. These were the qualities he had inherited from his

ancestors and which he passed on to his progeny.

Wives and Children

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was first married during the life time of his father. Only one son, Salāh-ud-din was born to his wife who died during his teens.[34] The first wife of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm died in 1128 or 1129/1716-17 after the marriage of Shāh Waliullah.[35] The second wife of the Shāh was the daughter of Shaikh Muhammad of Phulat who gave birth to two sons, Shāh Waliullah and Shāh Ahlullah.

Death

In his seventy-seventh year the Shāh fasted during Ramadhan for the last time. In the succeeding month he fell ill and soon he was hanging between life and death. There was a temporary recovery from sickness, but he had a relapse in the beginning of Safar. A bit earlier than dawn one day he was found sinking again but he continued to enquire if it was time for the dawn prayer. On getting a reply in negative several times, he grew a bit angry and said: "Well, if it is not the time for your prayer, it has arrived for mine." He asked those attending him to help him face the *Qibla* and then he performed the prayers by making signs of genuflexion and prostration, although it was uncertain whether the time for *fajr* prayer had actually arrived or not. The prayer ended, he got himself busy in the litanies and died in that condition. This was the morning of Wednesday, the 12th of Safar, 1131/23rd December, 1718. Farrukh Siyar was then the ruling sovereign who was imprisoned by the Sayyid Brothers soon after the death of the Shāh. Farrukh Siyar was strangulated to death after 50 days' imprisonment during which he was subjected to inhuman brutality and the city seethed with disorder and discontentment. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was 77 years of age at the time of his death.[36]

Shāh Waliullah's estimate of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm

Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm has left nothing in writing (save a

pamphlet) which may evince his intellectual attainment. All that we know about his talents has come to us through his worthy son Shāh Waliullah who has portrayed a lively profile of his father in the *Anfās-al-'Arifīn*. His description shows that Shāh Waliullah was impressed by the intellectual gifts, inward perfection of spirit, pure-heartedness and angelical qualities of his father to an extent more than a talented son usually is of his father. His graphic account of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm convinces the reader that he was not merely confident but felt deeply impressed by his father's compass of mind and spiritual attainments. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn* makes it abundantly clear that Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm's guidance and training of Shāh Waliullah had been chiefly responsible for the development of his intellectual faculties and the perfections, inward as well as outward, attained by him. It seems that Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm had succeeded in the transfusion of his inner virtues into his son.

Characteristics of Arab Immigrants

The brief description of Shāh Waliullah's family presented in these pages highlights three qualities which seem to be conspicuous in his forefathers.

The first of these was their attachment to Islam, its study and preaching, piety and inclination to serve as teachers and jurisconsults. There are always a few exceptions to this rule, but the academic traditions of a family always help in the grooming of scholarly persons. And if these traditions accompany an inclination to piety and health of soul, the grace of God can always be hoped to protect its members for serving the cause of religion. It has always happened with the pure-hearted souls as illustrated in the story of two orphan boys about whom the Qurān records: *And their father had been righteous*,[37] so thy Lord intended that the twain should attain their maturity and bring forth for themselves their treasure as a mercy from their Lord. Several families can be found in India whose continuous service in the propagation of religion and knowledge bears witness to this fact.

Another trait peculiar to the families tracing their descent

to the Arab stock is the painstaking care they have taken in preserving their genealogical tables—more meticulously than even the Arabs or their descendants in other Muslim countries—and their anxiety to maintain the purity of their blood which has sometimes resulted in limiting the nuptial ties to the closed circle of their own families. All this was partly due to exaggerated ideas relating to preservation of one's proud lineage and partly because of caste distinctions and social set up already prevalent in this country. Islam does not subscribe to these misplaced ideas of racial or caste distinctions but these came to be accepted by Muslims in the later period, particularly in the non-Arab countries. This, however, saved these families in maintaining their distinctive qualities and cultural identity for hundreds of years in the non-Arab or non-Muslim countries.

The third characteristic inherited by these families from the Quraysh was what is known as *farūsiyah* and *futawwah* in Arabic. These terms connote manly qualities of courage and valour as we have seen in the case of Shaikh Mu'azzam and Shaikh Wajīh-ud-din. This family trait was to manifest itself in a greater degree in Shāh Muhammad Ismāil, the grandson of Shāh Waliullah.

There are other reasons also, psychological and historical, for the preservation of these ancestral traits by their descendants. The people of Arab descent who migrated to India, from time to time, from Hijaz, Iraq, Iran or Turkistan, very often did so to save their religion, culture and honour endangered by the sweeping conquests of the Mongols. Their progeny could not forget, for several generations, why their forefathers had left their hearth and home. They tried to safeguard their proud patrimony and it was no wonder that God blessed them for the same reason. They could surely claim the Quranic description of "those who migrated and were driven forth from their houses and persecuted in My cause, and who fought and were slain."[38]

There were also families of Arab stock which had migrated to India for fighting in the way of God and spreading His message for which India of the sixth and seventh centuries of

Islamic era happened to be the most suitable region. This extensive land which is rather a sub-continent had been fully brought under the arms of Islam by that time. There were, however, numerous pockets ruled by Indian potentates who did not allow Islamic religious observances within their territories while others, subdued by the Sultans, raised the banner of revolt as soon as they got an opportunity to do so. It was not possible for the Sultans to maintain a large standing army for crushing such rebellions. Emigrants, courageous and ambitious, were always too willing to reconquer these territories for the central government for they deemed it their religious duty and also a means to obtain fiefs or appointment to the posts of governors and *qazis*. Indian history offers numerous examples of such Arab or Iranian immigrants who had succeeded in conquering such far off terrains which had eluded the victorious troops of the Sultanate.[39]

These incoming families were always conscious of the noble purpose for which their forefathers had migrated to India. The two goals they never lost sight of were spreading the message of Islam and maintaining their distinctive cultural and religious identity in an alien atmosphere. They knew that only by preserving the qualities of valour and courage they could live with self-respect and honour in a land known for assimilating all foreign influences. This awareness had helped them to preserve their identity for several generations to come.

These sentiments have been clearly expressed by Shāh Waliullah in one of his tracts written under the title of *Al-Maqālata-al-Wadhīyata fi-al-Nasīhata wal-Wasīyat* which is in the form of a will addressed primarily to his own family members but is really meant for all Indian Muslims.

He writes in it:

> "We should never forget that we are strangers here since our forefathers emigrated to India. Our lineage and language, both of which are of Arabia, are the things to be pround of. They bring us nearer to the leader of all human beings, the foremost among the messengers of God, the pride of all that this world contains.

Muhammad, the Apostle of Allah, on whom be peace and blessings. This is the greatest blessing of God which demands that we should not allow ourselves, as far as it is within our means, to be alienated from the usages, customs and traditions of the Arabs among whom the holy Prophet was brought up. We should not adopt the habits and manners of the non-Arabs and non-Muslims."[40]

He also writes in the same treatise:

"He is fortunate amongst us who has learnt something of the Arabic language, its grammar and syntax and studied the Qur'ān and *hadīth*. We should continue to pay visits to the sacred Mosques and create an inner attachment to them in our hearts for these constitute the key to the divine blessings; the least estrangement from or aversion to these would cause us to be degraded and deprived of divine grace."[41]

Shāh Waliullah belonged not only to the Arab stock but was also a direct descendant of the second Caliph 'Umar whose progeny had in the past stepped forward for the defence of Islam on several occasions. They had fought the anti-Islamic forces and revived the true faith. Their family traditions were a source of pride to them as well as acted as an incentive to strive for preservation of Islamic beliefs and practices in their original form. It was an illustrious son of the same descent who had in the tenth century courageously fought Akbar's calamitous call of religious electicism, the *Dīn-i-Ilāhi*, which was really meant to replace Islam by a new religion. Shaikh Ahmad Mujaddid Alf Thāni had deemed it a duty incumbent on him to fight that contamination of faith.[42] One of his letters written to Mulla Hasan of Kashmir expressed his disgust with the irreligious teachings and practices of certain mystics of his day. He had written:

"This humble self cannot countenance such prattle which makes his Fārūqi blood boil in anger."[43]

On another occasion when he was told that the first four

caliphs were not being mentioned in the sermons being delivered before the Friday prayer in Samānā town, he wrote:

> "*This distressing news, insufferable for me, has stirred the feelings of a Fārūqi that I am and has made me to scribe these lines.*"[41]

It is fairly certain that the bent of mind inherited by Shāh Waliullah from his forefathers must have urged him to devote himself to the task of Islamic revival which involved calling the people back to the original creed, rejection of innovations and polytheistic practices, teaching and preaching of the Qur'ān and the *sunnah* and refutation of unorthodox views held by the Shi'ites. Psychological and racial instincts running in the blood and the behavioral experience of good many families support this view which has been thus expressed in a *hadith*: "People are deposits like the mines of silver and gold; those among them who were better during the days of pagan past would be better in Islam provided they are able to comprehend it."[45]

Notes and References :—

1. It is a small pamphlet of 10 pages of average size and is included in a collection of his five articles. It was printed by Matb'a Ahmadi, Delhi. *Anfas-al-Ārifīn* comprises this article with seven more articles written by Shāh Waliullah.
2. For details see *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. II, pp. 147-48.
3. *Ma'āthar al-Ajdād*, pp. 6-7.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.
6. Shaikh 'Abdul 'Aziz 'Abbāsi (898-975/1493-1567) of Jaunpūr who later on took up residence at Delhi was a prominent Shaikh of the Chishtiyah order. He was the spiritual successor of Shaikh Qāzi Khān of Zafarābād and Shaikh Tāj Mahmūd of Jaunpur, both belonging to the Chishtiyah school. He was exceedingly courteous and humble and reposed confidence in the doctrine of *Wahdat-ul-Wajūd*. He used to write *zarra-i-nāchīz* (worthless speck) before his name in his letters, and strangely enough, the expression was computed to indicate the year of his death. He died reciting the Quranic

verse : 'Therefore glory be to Him in whose hand is the dominion over all things! Unto Him ye will be brought back' (36 : 82). Shāh Waliullah has written a small treatise entitled *Al-Nabadhatul Ibrizyata fil-Latifata-al-'Āzizyata* about him. (*Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol. IV).

7. Shāh Waliullah has written a pamphlet entitled *Al-'Atīyata al-Samadīyah fi-al-Anfās-al-Muhammadiyah* about him. The tract is included in Shāh Waliullah's *Majmu'a-al-Rasā'il*.
8. Now in district Barabanki.
9. *Al-'Atīyata al-Samadīyah, op. cit.* p. 20.
10. See *Nuzhatul-Khawatir*, Vol. VI, for biographical details of Shaikh Muhammad Āshiq.
11. *Al-'Atīyata al-Samadīyah, op. cit.*, pp. 22-25.
12. *Ibid*, p. 25.
13. Q. 33 : 28.
14. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, pp. 86-88.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 89-94.
16. First published by Matb'a Ahmadi, Delhi and thereafter at Mujtabā'i Press, Delhi. The references are from the first edition.
17. Q. 55 : 29.
18. Q. 17 : 20.
19. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, p. 4.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
21. Known as *Istaktāb*, it was a means to sink the remembrance of God in one's heart.
22. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, p. 5.
23. See *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, pp. 6-15.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
25. Shaikh Abul Qāsim was a spiritual successor of Shaikh Muhammad Wali of Nārnaul. He also benefited from the guidance provided by Shaikh Abul 'Alā, the mentor of Shaikh Wali Muhammad. He was permitted to impart spiritual instruction by Shaikh Wali Muhammad. Shaikh Abul Qāsim died in 1089/1678. His mystical order known as Abul 'Alāiya Ahrariya, represented a fusion of Chishtiyah and Naqshbandiyah systems. Shaikh Muhammad Tirmidhi of Kalpi also subscribed to this order. (See *Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol. V, p. 22.
26. See *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, pp. 29-34.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-50.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-65.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-85.
30 This had led Shāh Waliullah to take an attitude showing compatability of the two doctrines of *Wahdat-ul-Wajūd* and *Wahdat-us-Shahūd.*
31. Which in term of modern prices would be more than rupees fifty lakhs.
32. Hakim Syed Abdul Hai al-Hasani, *Al-Thaqāfat al-Islamiyah fil Hind*, Demascus, p. 111.
33. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, p. 24.
34. There are other reports to suggest that Shāh Waliullah's step-brother died after coming to age.
35. Shāh Waliullah writes in the *Al-Juz-al-Latīf* that he was fourteen years of age when his father got him married. He made haste and disagreed with those who wanted to defer the marriage for some-time. The Shāh also says that soon after his marriage, the family had to suffer several bereavements one of which was the death of his step-mother. His father had hinted that he wanted to avoid postponement of the marriage which would have become unavoidable due to these sad occurrences.
36. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn* pp. 83-85.
37. Q. 18 : 82.
38. Q. 3 : 185.
39. To cite one example by way illustration, Syed Qutb-ud-din al-Madani (d. 677 A.H.), the proginator of Qutbi Hasani family of Oudh to which belonged Saiyid Ahmad Shahid, came to India in the seventh century by way of Ghazni with a retinue of his family members and others. From Delhi he moved on to the east and conquered Kannauj, Manikpur and Kara from the Rajas ruling over those territories and thus brought those territories under the then Sultanate. See *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd—His Life and Mission*, pp. 21-22.
40. *Al-Maqalāt al-Wadhiyat-fi-al-Nasīhata wal-Wasīyata*, Delhi, 1267 A.H.
41. *Ibid.*
42. See *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Lucknow, 1983, Vol. III.
43. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, *Maktūbāt Imām Rabbāni*, Lucknow, 1877, Vol. I, Letter No. 100.
44. *Ibid*, Vol. II, Part VI, Letter No. 15.
45. *Sahīh Muslim.*

IV

A Biographical Sketch

Shāh Waliullah[1] was born at dawn on Wednesday, the 4th of Shawwāl 1114/10th February, 1703 at Phulat (now in district Muzaffarnagar) in the house of his maternal grandfather. His year of birth can be computed from his chronogrammatic name 'Azīm-ud-din.[2] Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was sixty years of age at the time of Shāh Waliullah's birth. It is related that Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm decided to contract the second marriage while his first wife, the mother of his eldest son Shaikh Salāh-ud-din was still alive on having the divination of a son from another wife. Shaikh Muhammad of Phulat on coming to know of the intention of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm, offered the Shāh[3] to give his daughter in marriage which took place early in the year Shāh Waliullah was born.

The name of Shāh Waliullah's mother, given in the *Al-Qaul-al-Jali*, was Fakhr-un-Nisa, The author of this book Shaikh Muhammad who happened to be a nephew of Shāh's mother reports that she was well-versed in religious disciplines. He says: "His (Shāh Waliullah's) mother had received schooling in the Qur'ān and *hadith*, was adept in the spiritual path and a knower of truth. She was as qualified as her name indicated; a pride for the womenfolk."[4]

Shāh Waliullah relates that his father had been foretold of his birth in a dream by Khwājā Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyār Kākī

who also asked his father to give his name to the baby. However, Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm forgot about the instruction of the Khwājā and thus he was given the name of Waliullah. Later on when his father recalled it to his memory he was bynamed as Qutb-ud-din Ahmad.[5]

Shāh Waliullah was seven years of age when he first joined his parents in the midnight prayer and gave his hand into theirs, as predicted in the vision of his father before his birth.[6]

Education

Shāh Waliullah was admitted into the primary school (maktab) at the age of five years.[7] He was circumcised when he had attained the age of seven years, and also started offering prayers regularly. He committed the Qur'ān to his memory within a year and started schooling in Arabic and Persian.[8] After he had read the preliminary text-books; he studied the *kāfiyah.* At the age of ten he began the study of the *Sharh Jāmi.* Shāh Waliullah says that the study of these books had fitted him for going through other books by himself. The Shāh poured over a part of *Baidāwi* when he was fourteen and finished his schooling of the then prevalent curriculm at the age of fifteen years. His father invited a large number of guests to partake in a repast on that occasion.[9]

The Shāh then studied a major portion of the *Mishkāt* under his own father and was also taught parts of *Sahīh Bukhāri, Shamā'il Tirmidhi* Quranic commentaries of *Madārik* and *Baidwāi* by him.[10] He says that it was a grace of God that he attended the lectures delivered by his father on the exegesis of the Qur'an which helped him to understand the Qur'an in depth.[11]

The Syllabus followed by the Shāh

Shāh Waliullah has given in detail the syllabus undergone by him. *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) included *Sharh Waqāyah* and a part of *Hidāyah, Usūl-Fiqah* (juristic principles) had *Hosāmi* and the major portion of *Taudhīh-wa-Talwīh, Mantiq* (logic) comprised *Sharh Shamsiyah* and a part of *Sharh Matāl'e, Kalam*

(theological dialectics) included the whole of *Sharh-i-'Aqā'id* and certain parts of the *Hāshiyah-i-Khiyāli* and *Sharh-i-Mawāqif*, *Sulūk* (mysticism) had parts of *'Awārif-al-Ma'ārif* and *Rasā'il Naqsh-bandiyah*, and *Haqā'iq* (dogmatics) included *Sharh Rubā'iyāt-i-Jāmi* and *Lawāyih Muqaddimah Sharh-i-Lam'āt*, *Muqaddimah Naqād al-Nasūs*, *Khawās-i-Asmā'-wa-Ayāt* and *Al-Fawāyed al-Ma'ātah*.

The syllabus of *Tibb* (medicine) included *Mūjiz*, *Falsafah* (philosophy) had *Sharh Hidāyat-al-Hukamā* and few other treatises, *Ma'āni* (rhetoric) comprised a greater portion of *Mutawwal* and the part of *Mukhtasar al-Ma'āni* containing commentary of Mulla Zādā and certain books of Mathematics and numerology.

The syllabus undergone by Shāh Waliullah was to a large extent prepared by Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm. In the syllabus prevalent in India since the seventh century, certain additions relating to theological dialectics, rhetoric and logic had been made by the end of ninth century on the arrival of Shaikh 'Abdullah and Shaikh 'Azizullah from Multan to Delhi. Then in the tenth century, when Amīr Fathullah Shirāzi came to Delhi, certain writings of the Iranian scholars like Muhaqiq Dawwāni, Mīr Sadr-ud-din Shirāzi, Mīr Ghiyāth-ud-din Mansūr and Mirza Jān also found place in the curriculum. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm adopted a selective approach in preparing the syllabus for his son, which showed his realism as well as confidence in the ability and intelligence of his son. He deleted several text-books which were merely repetitive as, for instance, he got him to study only *Kāfiyah*, and *Sharh Jāmi* for grammar and syntax in place of *Misbāh*. *Lubb-al-Albāb* (of Qazi Nasīr-ud-din Baidāwai) and *Irshād* (of Qazi Shihab-ud-din of Daulatabād). In the juristic principles he taught *Hosāmi* and certain parts of *Taudih-wa-Talmīh* in place of the prevalent text-books that is, *Manār* and its commentary and *Usūl Bazdawi*. He also deleted *Kashshāf* in exegesis, *Mashāriq ul-Anwār* in *hadith* and *Muqamāt Harīri* in literature although the last mentioned book was considered an important part of the then curriculum and certain teachers even

insisted on memorisation of a part of the book. It is also possible that a few of the text-books deleted by Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm might have lost their importance in the pedagogic circles by the beginning of the twelfth century.

It is to be noted that in the twelfth century Mulla Nizām-ud-din of Firangi Mahal, Lucknow, had brought about significant changes in the curriculum of Arabic madrasas. Mulla Nizām-ud-din who died in 1161/1748 being a bit elder than Shāh Waliullah, made significant changes by including new text-books particularly for the study of grammar, etymology and syntax, logic and philosophy, mathematics, rhetoric and theological dialectics. A few additions and alterations came to be made later on by the disciples of Mulla Nizām-ud-din whose curriculum known as *Dars-i-Nizāmi* was voluntarily adopted by all the educational institutions. It is still prevalent in certain institutions following the old curriculum.[12]

The syllabus reported to have been gone through by Shāh Waliullah includes no text-book on Arabic literature although his Arabic works, especially the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, bear witness to his command over Arabic. The *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* even brings into prominence the unique style of the Shāh which is not only lucid, simple and direct but also the most appropriate for literary creations and expression of serious thoughts. No writer after Ibn Khaldūn can afford to bear comparison with the facile pen of Shāh Waliullah. It seems that the Shāh had, by himself, waded through those living and original works of Arabic literature which were free from the laboured pedantry of the non-Arab style of later period. His stay in Hijaz gave him an opportunity as if through a plan of the Providence, to prepare himself for his great literary works.[13] If the Shāh has not inadvertently missed to mention *Muqāmāt-i-Harīrī* from the course of study pursued by him, it was perhaps better that he did not go through it since the cobwebs spun by the previous generations of imitative writers unable to express their thoughts in a simple and direct style, show influence of the rhyming prose of al-Harīrī. All the writers after al-Harīrī had imitated his

style although his refinements had been rendered archaic with the passage of time: such was al-Harīrī's influence that even the legal dicta were phrased by the jurists in the same diction.

The Shāh says that he used to have a flow of ideas even in the days he was studying and this went on increasing gradually.[14] During the twelve years, after the death of his father when he taught the students different religious and rational subjects, he got the opportunity to reflect over a variety of issucs.

Tutorship of Shāh's father

Shāh Waliullah says that his father was very kind to him—kinder than any father, teacher or spiritual guide can be to his ward.[15] His father used to teach in a way that his words sank into the heart of the listner. Once the Shāh wasted his day in sight-seeking with his friends. On his return, the Shāh reports, his father said, "Waliullah, did you do anything of lasting value during these twenty-four hours? I have recited *darūd* so many times today" The Shāh, as he says, lost all interest in excursions and thereafter never wasted his time in that manner.[16] His father used to pay particular attention in instructing the Shāh about prudence, etiquettes and cool-headedness. The Shāh had been instructed by his father to take precedence in saluting those who were lowly and to be kind and courteous to them. He had also warned the Shāh against taking a fancy to any particular dress or mode of expression, or showing aversion to a thing edible. His every desire had to be based, as the Shāh's father had told him, not on seeking any pleasure but on following some *sunnah* of the holy Prophet, or meeting any need, or promoting oneself in wisdom and morals. He had also told the Shāh that nothing in his mode of sitting or walking should be indicative of indolence or fatigue. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was, according to Shāh Waliullah, prudent and courageous, efficient in management of his affairs, zealous in religious matters and moderate in temperament. Shāh Waliullah had inherited all these qualities of his father.

Shāh Waliullah was also initiated by his father into his

spiritual order at the age of fourteen years. He instructed the Shāh in the methods of contemplation and self-edification, and also endued him with the robe of mystics. Shāh Waliullah was of seventeen years when his father died. During his last illness Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm permitted the Shāh to enroll novices to his spiritual order and to guide them. He had remarked on the occasion: "His hand is like unto my own."[17]

Marriage

Shāh Waliullah's age was only fourteen when his father got him married to the daughter of the Shāh's maternal uncle Shaikh 'Ubaid Ullah Siddiqi of Phulat. Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm was pressed to postpone the marriage for the time-being but he insisted on performance of the ceremony. Subsequent events, particularly the bereavements Shāh's family had to face, proved the wisdom of Shāh's father. If the marriage had been postponed once, it would have been deferred for a long time.[18] The first son born to his wife was Shaikh Muhammad. The Shāh himself schooled his son and wrote a primer for him. Later on Shaikh Muhammad studied the *Shamāil Tirmidhi* along with Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz under the same teacher.[19] Shāh Muhammad migrated to Budhana after the death of his father and died there in 1208/1793. He was buried in the courtyard of the Jami Mosque of Budhana.[20] It was because of his eldest son that the Shāh was also known as Abu Muhammad.[21] Two sons of Shāh Muhammad are reported by some to have been buried near him while others claim that he was issueless. In his three letters to Shāh Abu Sa'eed of Rae-Bareli, Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz has conveyed the good wishes of his elder brother Shāh Muhammad to him. These letters speak of the great regard Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz had for Shāh Muhammad.[22]

Second Marriage

After the death of his first wife Shāh Waliullah married Bibi Irādat, the daughter of Saiyid Thanā Ullah of Panipat who is reported to be a descendant of Saiyid Nāsir-ud-din Shahīd.[23]

Bibi Irādat was the mother of the Shah's four sons—Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, Shāh Raf'i-ud-din, Shāh 'Abdul Qādir and Shāh 'Abdul Ghani—who can be rightly called the four pillars of Islamic revival in India. The Shāh had also a daughter Ummat-ul-'Azīz by his second wife who was married to Muhammad Fā'iq b. Muhammad 'Āshiq of Phulat. Her descendants still reside in India.

Pilgrimage voyage

The Shāh's journey for the pilgrimage and stay in Hijaz is a landmark of crucial importance in his subsequent intellectual and reformative endeavour. During his stay in Hijaz which extended to a period of more than a year, be equipped himself thoughtfully in a way that was scarcely possible in India. The Shāh required a centre of learning, a place where the savants from every part of the Islamic world had converged for the sharpening of his wits He undertook a deep study of the *hadith* in Hijaz under the most erudite scholars which later on became the cornor-stone of his revivalist campaign. His studies also helped him to equip himself in comprehending the secrets and wisdom of the *shari'ah* to a degree not attained by anyone during the few hundred years in the past.

The Shāh was thirty years of age[24] when he set out for the pilgrimage. The fact that he had made up his mind to go for the *haj* during a time of unsettled political conditions and lawlessness prevailing in the country and frequent piracies in high seas speaks of his courage and attachment to the sacred Mosques. The Shāh also wanted to study the conditions in other Muslim countries before deciding his course of action for the defence of Islam in India. Most probably he had the Quranic instruction for acquiring knowledge—*that they may witness things that are of benefit to them*—in his mind for he wanted to benefit from the experiences of the learned and wise from all parts of the world converging in the centre of Islam.

Sūrat was then the sea-port for ships sailing for Arabia but the entire route, particularly Malwa and Gujarat were hunting

grounds of Maratha marauders. The great distance from the north to the south India had in those days to be covered on carts driven by bulls or camels.[25] Indian seas were also infested by a most formidable breed of European pirates, cheifly English and Portugese, who practised fiendish cruelty on the people, men, women and children. The hardships undergone by the *hāj* pilgrims can be seen in the few travelogues of the time that have survived. The journey within the country was no less hazardous. The Shāh says that whenever anybody accompanying his party was missing during the night, he started reciting the litany of *Yā Badī'ul-Ajā'ib* for his safety.

The ship boarded by the Shāh took forty-five days to reach Jiddah and he reached Makkah on the 15th of Dhi Q'ada. He also started delivering lectures within the Holy Mosque, near the place allocated to the Hanafite Imām. It was a great success since the number of people who flocked to listen him was quite large.[26]

The Shāh writes in the *Al-Juz'-al-Latīf*: "I had a great yearning to perform the *haj* during 1143/1730-31 which was accomplished by the end of that year. During the succeeding year I did homage to God at the K'aba, paid a visit to Medina, studied *hadīth* under Shaikh Abu Tāhir Madani and other scholars of the two holy cities, was bestowed a robe by Shaikh Abu Tāhir Madani who perhaps combined all the different mystic orders in his person and performed the *haj* a second time by the end of the year. Early in 1145/1732 I was again on the move for India and I reached my home (at Delhi) safely on the 10th Rajab 1145/16th December 1732."[27]

Mentors of the Shāh

In the *Insān-al-'Āyen fī Mashā'ikh al-Harmayn*, written by Shāh Waliullah in the memory of his teachers in the two sacred cities, he has given a bit detailed account of Shaikh Abu Tāhir Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Kurdi-al-Madani for whom he had a great regard and affection. His description of these men of learning shows that the guides on the path of spirit leave an

indelible mark on the character and morals of intelligent students.

As the Shāh says Shaikh Abu Tāhir Muhammad al-Kurdi had first studied *hadīth* under his own father Shaikh Ibrāhīm al-Kurdi, and then from Shaikh Hasan Ujaimi.[28] Shaikh Abu Tāhir also got instruction from Ahmad Nakhali and took lessons in *Shamāil-i-Nabawi* and *Musnad Imām Ahmad* from Shaikh 'Abdullah Basari for two months. He was permitted to transmit the *ahādīth* contained in the works of Mullah 'Abdul Hakīm of Sialkot and Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith of Delhi by Shaikh 'Abdullah of Lahore. He was also taught a quarter of *Fath-ul-Bāri* and certain other Arabic works by Shaikh Sa'eed of Kokan.[29]

Muhsin b. Yahya Turhati relates in the *Al-Yān'i al-Janni* that Shaikh Abu Tāhir often remarked that Shāh Waliullah was instructed by him in the recital of the *ahādīth*, while he had himself benefited from the Shāh in understanding their import. He also mentioned it in the certificate he granted to Shāh Waliullah.[30]

Shaikh Abu Tāhir was an eminent scholar of *hadīth*, yet he was a man perfect in spirit who never relished criticism of the mystics. Shāh Waliullah reports that when he sought leave of Shaikh Abu Tāhir to return home, he recited a couplet, saying:

I have forgotten all other paths,
Save the one that leads to thy hearth.

Shaikh Abu Tāhir was pleased to get an almost similar reply from Shāh Waliullah. Shāh 'Abul 'Azīz relates that his father had replied, "Forgotten is whatever I had ever read except *hadīth* and religious lore."[31]

Shāh Waliullah's subsequent life and his engagements bear testimony to the fact that he had spoken the truth. *Of the believers are men who are true to that which they covenanted with Allah.*[32]

Shaikh Abu Tāhir died[33] in Ramadhan 1145/February 1733, that is, about two months after the Shāh reached his home. His father, Shaikh Ibrāhim Kaur'ani[34] was a fan of Ibn Taimiyah, always defending the latter whenever any body criticized him.

Saiyid N omān Khair-ud-din Ālūsi writes in the *Jal'ā-al-'Aynain fi-Mahākumat-al-Ahmadain* about Shaikh Kaurāni.

> "He belonged to the Salafi school and defended Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah. Similarly, he would explain away these expressions of the mystics which apparantly alluded to in-dwelling, unity or essentiality (of human soul with God)."[35]

The advocacy and acclamation of Shaikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah in the writings of Shāh Waliullah should have come from the influence of Shaikh Abu Tāhir and his father Shaikh Ibrāhim Kaurāni just as he is more often inclined to adopt a conciliatory attitude in several other matters like his own father.

Another scholar of *hadīth* who certified competence of the Shāh in that discipline was Shaikh Tāj-ud-din Qala'i, the Mufti of Makkah, who had been the disciple of Shaikh 'Abdullah b. Sālim of Egypt and Shaikh 'Ujaimi. He attended the lectures of Shaikh Tāj-ud-din on Bukhāri for three days and heard his recital of several other *hadīth* collections.[36]

During his stay in Hijaz the Shāh received instruction in *Muwatta* of Yahya b. Yahya from Shaikh Muhammad Wafd Ullah. He also granted a certificate of proficieny to the Shāh in the *hadith* compilation of his father Shaikh Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Sulaimān al-Maghribi.[37]

The Shāh had earlier attended the lectures of Shaikh Muhammad Afzal of Sialkot, the most erudite scholar of *hadīth* in India.[38] Shaikh Muhammad Afzal had undergone schooling under Shaikh Sālim 'Abdullah Basri and Shaikh 'Abdul Ahad Ibn Khwaja Muhammad Sa'eed Sarhindi, and was the lecturer in *hadīth* in Madrasa Ghāzi-ud-din Khān at Delhi. He had also taught *hadīth* to Mirza Mazhar Jān-i-Jānān and guided him in the spiritual discipline.[39]

The Shāh was accompanied by his maternal uncle Shaikh 'Ubaid Ullah of Bārha and a cousin Shaikh Muhammad 'Āshiq in the pilgrimage. He learnt of his mother's death at Makkah while he was on his way back to India.[40]

Shāh Waliullah was a keen student of *hadīth* and the two

holy cities offered him the best opportunity to pursue his studies there as well as to instruct others who came there for the purpose from different parts of the Islamic world. The merit of offering prayers in the two sacred Mosques and unsettled conditions in India which was gradually slipping from the hands of long established Muslim rule to the grip of a foreign power were some of the additional reasons that would have provided a justification for the Shāh to opt for permanent settlement in the holy land. But he decided to return to India since divine Providence had earmarked for him the glorious role of a reformer and renovator of faith in his homeland. He had in fact received an indication of his future course of action from the holy Prophet. He had the premonition: "It is ordained by God that the Muslims would be enabled to consolidate themselves through you."[41]

The Shāh was pre-disposed to make India the centre of his intellectual and religious endeavours and wanted those closer to him to do likewise. It was the country where the earlier Muslims had worked hard to serve the cause of religion and education, had produced great scholars and saints in different eras of its history, and the country was also destined to become the centre of *hadīth* and other religious disciplines. One of the students of the Shāh was Makhdūm Moin-ud-din Sindhi. When Sindhi expressed his desire to settle down in Hijaz, the Shāh wrote to him:

> "As regards your intention not to return to your homeland, do not take any final decision nor insist on it until you or one closer to you finds an inspiration in his heart in this matter."[42]

Teaching of Hadīth

On his return from Hijaz, Shāh Waliullah started teaching *hadīth* in the Madrasa Rahīmiyah, the school established by his father in the locality now known as Mehndiyān in old Delhi. His lectures soon attracted students from other madrasas in such large numbers that the Madrasa Rahīmiyah proved insufficient to accommodate all of them. Emperor Muhammad Shāh,

despite his numerous faults and failings, provided a spacious building to the Shah for his madrasa in the new city, where he started teaching *hadith* to his students. Maulvi Bashīr-ud-din writes about this madrasa.[43]

'The madrasa, occupying a spacious and imposing building, was regarded as an institution of higher learning in those days. It remained in that state until the time of Great Revolt when it was demolished and people took away its logs and doors."

He also says :

"Several houses were built on its site but the place is still known as Madrasa Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz."

The reminiscences of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz contain a reference to the mosque of the madrasa in these words :

'During the days I was born a number of persons purer of soul, who happened to be friends of my father, like Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq, Molvi Nūr Muhammad and others used to reside in this mosque for prayers (duing the last ten days of Ramadhan)."[44]

Hakim 'Abdul Hai, the author of *Nuzhatul Khwātir*, who went to Delhi in 1312/1894-95, has left the follow account dated 26th Rajab/ January 23, 1895, in his diary.

"After attending the lecture of Syed Nazīr Husain, I had a mind to pay a visit to the madrasa of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz where a number of my ancestors had received education for I deemed it an honour to perform the meanest task at the place.[45] I went to Jama Masjid and thence to Chitli Qabar where the road branches off into two lanes. The one on the right hand leads straight to the Khanqah.[46] I went in the lane which leads to Kūcha Faulād Khān on the left side. This road goes ahead to Kalān Mahal. Here in Kalān Mahal was the madrasa of our most respected Shaikh. It brought to my mind: "........who, passing by a township which had fallen into utter ruin, exclaimed : How shall Allah give this township life after its

> death?"[47] God bless me, what on the earth! Once students from Arabia and Iran converged at this place and derived benefit from here. Now it is all in ruins, nobody lives here."[48]

Hakim 'Abdul Hai also cites Syed Zahīr-ud-din, a descendant of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, as having told him that the madrasa was earlier in Mehndiyān near the graves of the Shāh's family members. When Shāh Waliullah was provided the building in the new city after the death of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm, he shifted to the new madrasa and lived there for the rest of his life.[49]

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz's Description of His Father

There is no contemporary biography or any other writing describing the daily routine of Shāh Waliullah except the reminiscences of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz in which brief references have been made at several places about his father.

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz says that he had never seen a man with such a strong memory as his father. He adds that he had heard about such persons but never seen anyone like him.[50] A man of great scholarship as he was, he was also so diligent that when he sat down to work after *ishrāq*, he did not move from the place until it was mid-day.[51] He had trained his disciples in different branches of learning to whom he had entrusted the task of teaching students. He used to explain the intricate points of different disciplines to those advanced in learning or spent his time in writing, or study of *hadīth* or delivering lectures. He always took down whenever any new idea crossed his mind or he had an intuition. Of robust health he seldom fell ill.[52] Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz also says that his grandfather was a practising physician. Shāh Waliullah had given up the family profession, but he often went through the books of Tibb.[53] He had a literary bent of mind and often recited a few verses, though the verses recited could be seldom classed as mystic poetry.[54]

Death

At last the day came when this great luminary who had spent

about you and told others how during the depredations of Abdāli army you intervened and brought about peace and tranquillity.[59] Perhaps the Shāh wanted to meet you during his last days, for, he once said to me, "Mīr Abu Sa'eed wanted to come here. It would be better if he comes early."

"My dear, now you cannot meet the Shāh, but his writings which are ninety or even more in number on religious sciences, that is, *Tafsīr* (exegesis) and *Usūl* (principles of exegesis), *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *Kalām* (theological dialecties) and *hadith* are dealt with in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, *Asrār-i-Fiqh*, *Mansūr*,[60] *Izālat al-Khifa 'an-Khilāfatu-al-Khulfā* and translation of the Qur'ān. Each one of these consists of eighty or ninety folds. His description of spiritual realities in tracts like *Altāf-al-Quds*, *Hama'āt*, *Fuyūz-al-Haramayn* and *Anfās al-'Ārifīn* are indicative of his inward perfection and grace. If you decide to get them copied for dissemination, the task can be accomplished with a little attention. Only God knows if such books have ever been written as asserted by certain erudite scholars. On whatever topic the Shāh wrote anything, he has laid down the fundamental principles of that subject.

"This humble self as well as the sons of the Shāh and his friends hope that soon after you come to know of this calamitous event, you would leave for Delhi to visit his grave and pray for him. I am thus awaiting your arrival here, and if you happen to come early, I would deem it my good fortune to meet you here. If, however, you are likely to take some time in coming here, let me know of it so that I may leave for home.

"Another matter to be mentioned is that Miān Muhammad 'Āshiq has asked me to convey his wishes to you and also expressed the desire that you may send him

copies of letters addressed to you by the Shāh so that they may also be included in his compilation. Miān Ahlullah, the sons of the Shāh and his friends want me to convey their greetings to you.

"I had told the Shāh about the illness and death of brother Mohammad Moin[61] at Budhana. He had expressed his grief and prayed for the salvation of his soul."[62]

Shāh Waliullah died on Saturday in the afternoon of 29th Muharram 1176/21 August, 1762, as stated by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz in his reminiscences.

"He died on 29th Muharram. The year of his death can be calculated from the chronogram *Aū Buwad Imām-i-'Āzam-i-Dīn* (He was the great leader of religion) and *Hāi Dil-i-Rozgār Raft*[63] (Ah! the core of the Age has gone)."[64]

The Shāh was buried at the place called Mehndiyān to the right of Delhi gate.[65] The place occupied by this graveyard was once the site of a hospice of Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz, a maternal grand-father of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm. The grave of Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz still exists at a little distance. Shaikh Raf'ī-ud-din had taken up residence there since the ancestors of Shāh Waliullah had built their houses in that locality. Shāh Waliullah had abandoned the place and moved into the city then known as Shāhjahānabād. The place was later converted into a family graveyard where Shāh Waliullah, his four sons as well as his father Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm were buried. The tombstones give the years of their death. There are also graves of other members of his family, both men and women. Nearby is a mosque around which there are graves of a large number of saints and scholars or those related to the family of Shāh Waliullah. The number of graves in this cemetery goes on increasing day by day.

Notes and References:

1 Shāh Waliullah has happily given all the necessary details regard-

ing his education, tutorship by his own father, informal education on path of spirit, journey to Hijaz and the meetings with eminent personalities in that country, albeit briefly, in his autobiography. Two more sources of his biographical details are *Al-Juz-al-Latīf fi-Tarjumatil 'Abd-al-Zay'if* and *Insān-al-'Ayen fi-Mashā'ikh al-Haramayan*. The details given here have been taken from these works as well as *Anfās-al-'Arifīn* and *Al-Qaul al-Jali.*

2. *Al-Juz-al-Latīf*, Lahore, n. d., p. 2.
3. *Anfās al-'Ārifīn*, pp. 62-63.
4. *Al-Qaul-al-Jali*, MSS. Khanqāh Kazimiyah, Kakori.
5. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, p 44.
6. *Ibid*, p. 63.
7. *Al-Juz-al-Latīf*, p. 2.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 3
10. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
12. For a detailed study of the changes made from time to time in the curriculum of Arabic educational institutions, Hakim Syed 'Abdul Hai's *As-Thaqāfat al-Islāmiyah fil-Hind* can be seen. It was published from Damascus and a Urdu brochure on the same subject entitled *Hindustān ke Nizām-i-Dars Aur Uske Taghaiyurāt* has been brought out from Lucknow.
13. "The Shāh," says the *Al-Y'anī al-Janni*, "during his stay in Hijaz learnt to speak chaste and lucid Arabic through his conversation with the Arabs."
14. *Al-Juz-al-Latīf*, p. 3.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
16. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, p. 63.
17. *Al-Juz-al-Latīf*, p. 3.
18. Shāh Waliullah says that shortly after his marriage his mother-in-law died and subsequent deaths in the family were those of his maternal-grandmother, a cousin named Shāh Fakhr 'Alam and then his step-mother.
19. *Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol. VI.
20. *Ibid*.
21. *Al-Irshād fi Muhimmāt al-Isnād*.

22. *Maktūb-al-Ma'ārif*, MSS., pp. 16-18.

23. We find a mention of Syed Nāsir-ud-din Shahīd on pages 281-90 of Ahmad 'Ali Khairābādi's *Qasr-i-'Ārifān*' (published by Dr. Muhammad Bāqir in 1965). He is reported to be the son of Imām Bāqir Zain-ul-'Ābidīn and brother of Imām J'afar Sādiq. Ahmad 'Ali Khairābādi says that Nāsir-ud-dīn Shahīd came to Khurāsān from a place known as Wāsit, and then to Gazni from where be bended his steps to Qannauj with a retinue of 67 cavalry (whose names have also been given by the author). In 146 A. H. he is reported to have arrived in Sonipat during the reign of Sultan Shihāb-ud-din Ghori. Nāsir-ud-din was then Governor of the province. A local Raja Arjun Dev wanted to purchase the horses of Syed Nāsir-ud-din, but as the offer was rejected by the latter, a battle ensued in which Arjun Dev was defeated but Syed Nāsir-ud-din died fighting with Arjun Dev's brother Har Har Dev on 12th Muharram, 147 A.H.

The details given above do not appear to be correct since Muslim arms had not gone beyond Sind and Multan by the year 147 A H. Mansūrah became the capital of Muslim possessions in Sind by the end of the third century or in the opening decades of the fourth century. Mahmūd of Ghazna ascended the throne in 387 A. H. and he first attacked India in 381 A. H. Shihāb-ud-din Muhammad Ghori in whose reign Syed Nāsir-ud-din is reported to have come to India, first attacked the country in 572-73 A. H. and finally won the battle against Prithivi Raj Chauhān in 588 A. H. No other work mentions Imām Nāsir-ud-din as the son of Imām Muhammad Bāqir. However, he is reported as 22nd descendant of Imām Muhammad Bāqir by certain other writers. Thus the account given by the author of *Qasr-i-'Ārifān* is not correct, but Syed Nāsir-ud-din was a martyr as established by local traditions (the date of death not being certain). His descendants were closely related to the family of Shāh Waliullah.

24. It appears from the *Al-Qaul-al-Jali fi-Manāqib al-Wali* that the Shāh had earlier taken a trip at the age of twenty years for performance of the *haj*. When he reached the sea-port, he found that all the ships had embarked and none was available. He was left with no choice save to stay for sometime at Khambat where during a contemplative self-communion, he reached a spiritual state which made him give up the journey and return home. It is reported that he was bidden to return home by the holy Prophet.

25. It appears from the (*Malfūzāt*) reminiscences of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz

that Shāh Waliullah had passed through Rajputana also (pp. 73).

26. *Al-Qaul al-Jali*, (MSS).
27. *Al-Juz-al-Latīf*, p.5.
28. *Al-Insān al-'Ayen* gives his name as Shaikh Hasan 'Ajami which appears to be a printing mistake. His surname was Ujaimi as stated in *Al-'Ālām* Vol. II, p. 223 by Zarkali.
29. *Al-Insān al-'Ayen*, p. 13.
30. *Al-Yani al-Janni*
31. *Malfūzāt Hazrat Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz*, p. 93.
32. Q. 33 : 23.
33. *Al-Insān-al-'Ayen*, p 14.
34. Born in 1025 AH, he died in 1101 AH and wrote more than 80 works.
35. *Jalā-al-'Āynain*, Matb'at-al-Madani, Egypt, p. 41.
36. *Al-Insān-al-'Ayen*, pp. 15-16.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 7
38. *Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol. VI.
39 *Ibid.*,
40. *Al-Qaul-al-Jali* (MSS)
41. *Fuyūz-al-Harmain*, Matba Ahmadi, Delhi, p. 62.
42. *Hayāt Wali*, (Letters of Shāh Waliullah) p. 536, Matb'a Salfiyah, Lahore.
43. Bashir-ud-din, *Dār-ul-Hukūmat Delhi*, Vol. II, p. 286.
44. *Malfūzāt Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz*, p. 109, Mujtabai Press, Meerut.
45. The writer has given names of several persons among his ancestors who had received education at the Madrasa during the time of Shāh Wali Ullah and Shāh Abdul Aziz.
46. That is, the Khanqah of Shāh Ghulām 'Ali. Now it is known as Shāh 'Abdul Khair Marg.
47. Q 2 : 259.
48. Hakīm 'Abdul Hai, *Delhi Aur Uske Atrāf*, Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu, Delhi, pp. 63-64.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
50. *Malfūzāt*, p. 11. (The Publisher of the work, 'Muhammad Bashir-ud-din Siddiqi could not find the title originally given to his reminiscenes by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, but there is sufficient internal evidence to show that is was written by Shāh Abdul Azīz himself).
51. *Malfūzāt*, p. 43.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
55. Q. 3 : 185
56. *Malfūzāt Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz* (Urdu) Hāshmi Press, Meerut, p. 56, states that the Shāh was born on the 4th Shawwal, 1114, A. H. and

died on 29th Muharram 1176 A. H. and thus he died at the age of 61 year, and four months. The year of death can be computed from *Imām 'Azam-i-Dīn*.

57. Saiyid Muhammad N'omān was the great grandson of Shāh 'Alam Ullah, the genealogical table being : N'oman b. Nūr b. Huda b. 'Alam Ullah. He was born at Nasirabad in Rae Bareli. After receiving education at the place of his birth, he completed his formal studies under 'Abdullah of Amethi in Lucknow. He received spiritual instruction from Saiyid Muhammad b. Shāh 'Alam Ullah and after his death was guided by Saiyid Muhammad 'Adl *alias* Shāh L'al, the son of Saiyid Muhammad. Thereafter he attached himself for spiritual guidance to other spiritual disciples of Shāh Alam Ullah and then Shāh Waliullah. He was present at Delhi at the time Shāh Waliullah died. After the Shāh's death, he went abroad for pilgrimage and then to Bait-ul-Muqaddas and died on his way to Al-Khalil (where the grave of Prophet Ibrāhim still exists) in 1193/17 and was buried in Jerusalem (*Nuzhatul-Khawātir*, Vol. VI).
58. 89 : 28
59. The details of the event to which a reference is made is not known.
60. The book referred to is not clear.
61. Saiyid Muhammad Moin b. Saiyid Muhammad Ziā b. Shāh 'Alam Ullah was a cousin of Shāh Abu Sa'eed. He was elder than Shāh Abu Sa'eed and died in 1176 A. H.
62. *Maktūb al-Ma'ārif* (MSS), pp. 19-20.
63. According to Nūr-ul-Hasan Rāshid the correct phrase is *Hāi Wali-i-Rozgār Raft*, i. e. Ah! the saint of the Age has gone. (*Burhān*, Delhi, July 1983).
64. *Malfūzāt Hazrat Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz*, Meerut, 1314 A. H., p. 40.
65. "It was a building", according to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, "which had shops and arches in the ground floor and was decorated by four cupolas on its four corners. Nobody knows who built it or for what purpose but it is commonly believed that a certain Nawab used to errect Mehndiyān, a structure of bamboo strips mounted with paper, which was lighted inside with a candle in the honour of 'Abdul Qādir Jilāni. It was this custom of the Nawab which gave its name to the building, but nobody knows who this Nawab was". (*Athār-us-Sanādid*), Lucknow, 1876, pp. 50-51.

V

Reformative Endeavour of Shah Waliullah

Scope of Shāh's Reformative Work

The reformatory endeavour of the Shāh comprising propagation of the true content of faith, dissemination of teachings brought by the prophets and reinvigoration of the Muslim community with a fresh thought and ambition, was so wide in its scops and multi-dimentional in nature that we fail to find a similar effort having been made by anyone among his contemporaries or even among the learned and the savants of the old. This may be due, apart from the will of God, to the prevailing conditions during the time of Shāh Waliullah. The comprehensiveness of his literary endeavour, his vaulting ambition and his peculiar way of teaching and preaching led him to direct his reformatory and revivalist efforts to such varied fields of life that his biographer will find it difficult to adequately enumerate his accomplishments. However, we can divide his reformatory efforts into following fields.

1. Reform of the creed and call to the Qur'ān.
2. Propagation of *hadith* and the *sunnah* and integration of *fiqh* with *hadīth.*
3. Reinterpretation of the Islamic *sharī'ah* and exposition of the wisdom underlying *hadīth* and *sunnah.*

4. Elucidation of the theory of Caliphate, its basic characteristics and refutation of Shi'ite view in this regard.
5. Leading role played by him during the era of confusion following the decay of Moghul empire.
6. Admonition of different sections of Muslim society and inviting them to reform themselves
7. Providing instruction and training to a selected group of scholars for taking ahead the reformatory work initiated by him.

We shall first take up the Shāh's effort for restoration of the articles of belief and his call to the Qur'an since every revivalist endeavour at any place or time will have to accord priority to these. Any effort for regeneration of the Muslim community without inviting the people back to Qur'an will be inconclusive and fruitless. The Quranic description of the prophets and the biographical accounts of the earlier scholars who followed the prophets in the propagation of faith and morals leave no doubt that the revivalist efforts to the end of time shall have to follow the prophetic pattern indicated by the Qur'an.

Significance of creed

We would better give here an extract from our another work delineating the fundamental nature of creed in Islam.

> "The emphasis placed primarily in this religion is on the creed of monotheism; from Adam to Muhammad (peace be on them) every prophet demanded faith in this creed; they were averse to making any compromise in this regard or to give up the least part of it.
>
> "Virtuous living and ethical conduct moderation, goodness, worthy social set up and exemplary form of government had no worth or merit unless one also subscribed to the creed preached by them. The creed was end and purpose of the life of each prophet. Their endeavour throughout their lives was to propagate and establish this basic creed. In fact, it constituted the dividing line between the thought,

character and labours of the prophets of God, on the one hand, and national leaders, politicians and revolutionaries, on the other.[1]

"The knowledge about the essence of Divine Being and His attributes is the most important and highest form of cognition that man has received through the prophets of God. For man does not possess even the primary perceptions in regard to mute reality, the prophets of God constitute the only source of acquiring knowledge about God. Reasoning cannot help man in this field since no resemblance of divine form or function is available to help him in his analogical deduction. Far from anything having affinity with God, who is Unique, the Absolute, the Incomparable, too sublime for perception by the faculties possessed by man, there remains nothing for his understanding or even imagination after deducting the unknown from all ideas of time and space, of motion and matter, of sensation and reflection of the material world.........Yet, this is the knowledge most essential and surpassing; on it depends the well-being of man and his salvation. It is not only the fountain of creed and morals and civilization, but also helps man to understand himself and the cosmos around him, to fathom the secrets of life, to determine his own place in the universe, to pattern his behaviour with his fellow beings and to define the goal and end of his life."[2]

The promise of God, in particular, to help the believers in attaining His propinquity and pleasure and love and respect of their fellow beings depends solely on unadulterated creed of monotheism. Says God;

"Fear not nor grieve, for ye will overcome them if ye are (indeed) believers."[3]

The same principle has been stated more explicity in another verse of the Qur'ān which reads :

> "Allah hath promised such of you as believe and do good works that He will surely make them to succeed (the present rulers) in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed (others); and He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety after their fear. They serve Me. They ascribe no thing as partner unto Me. Those who disbelieve henceforth, they are the miscreants."[4]

The successors of the prophets of God, the angelic scholars, having an insight into the ideals and realities of religion, first prepare the soil for implanting the seed of faith and root out all traces of polytheism and infidelity (whether these are vestiges of the bygone cultures or products of local influences), irrespective of the time and labour involved in this herculean task. They never jump to achieve the ultimate end in view in a hurry.

> "Idolatry and associating partners to God (paying divine honours, supplicating or prostrating before beings other than God or offering up an oblation to them) constitute the universal and eternal ignorance which has always been the greatest failing of man—a wickedness which has always been present within him. But, this is the sacrilege which provokes the indignation of God, bars the way of spiritual, moral and cultural progress of man and brings about his fall from the exalted place he occupies to the bottomless chasm of ungodliness".[5]

Rejuvenation of Creed—Always Essential

The writer of these lines had described the religious condition of the Muslims during the time of Imām Ibn Taimiyah in the second volume of the *Saviours of Islamic spirit* which throws light on the elemental need for making constant efforts to revitalise the monotheistic creed.

> "Thoughts borrowed from the un-Islamic sources, irreligious precepts and dogmas fostered by the

> Ismailite Caliphate of Egypt and the pantheistic doctrines diffused by the illeterate and misguided *sufi* mystics had given birth to numerous heretical beliefs and customs in those days. The Muslim masses had begun to look up to their religious teachers of yore, saints and martyrs as intercessors with God in almost the same way as Ezra and Jesus Christ had been elevated to the pedestal of Divinity by the Jews and Christians. The tombs of Muslim saints presented the same spectacle—the same rituals, devotional services and oblations—as were commonly performed in martyries and sanctorums of other faiths. Muslims, too, invoked the aid of their saints rather than God: repaired to their graves in large numbers to celebrate the anniversaries of their death, constructed palatial buildings on their tombs, performed ceremonies implying reliance on them and perambulated around their shrines like the House of God."[6]

A graphic description of the perverted beliefs and practices in those days has been left by Imām Ibn Taimiyah.

> "........Supplications are offered to the departed saints to get their difficulties solved while the attendants are presumed to have the authority of declaring what is lawful or not under the *sharī'ah*........Many of these ignormuses could be seen offering prayers facing the tombs or beseeching the saints to take pity on them and pardon their sins. Some have even their backs towards the Ka'ba while offering prayers facing these graves; and when they are asked to desist from it they declare that the K'aba is meant to serve as a *qibla* for the laity while the elect and pure of heart need pay divine honours to the saints alone........ They poke fun at the unity of God and snear at the prayers offered to Him. They look with scorn upon *haj* and *hajees* and believe that the visit to the shrines of the saints is more estimable than the

> performance of *haj*. Some are even insolent enough to trifle with the mosques and the prayers offered therein for they believe that the invocation of the blessings of their *shaikhs* carries greater merit than the prayers offered to God.........Without bestowing any care on the mosques which give a dull and deserted look, shrines are adorned with beautiful carvings and decorated with a splash of colour and aristic designs."[7]

These were the conditions prevailing in the countries like Egypt, Syria and Iraq which were adjacent to the centre of Islam and the last resting place of the holy Prophet; companions of the last Prophet had brought these lands to the threshold of Islam; their people spoke Arabic and never for a day religious scholars had left teaching and preaching the Qur'ān and the *hadīth* there; and monumental works on different branches of Islamic sciences had been written in those countries.

It should not be difficult to imagine the situation in the twelfth century India where Islam had reached through a circuitous route of Iran, Turkistan and Afghanistan after losing much of its strength and vigour. Those who brought Islam to India were also not totally free from their racial and national predispositions. Moreover, a philosophy, culture and religion with strong streaks of idolatry and polytheism had predominated India for several hundred years or rather made it the sole spokesman of that thought and way of life. A larger portion of the Muslims in India had entered the fold of Islam directly from the Brahmanic society which was steeped in polytheistic culture. It is also noteworthy that for a long time Indian Islam had paid more attention to Greek thought and philosophy, thanks to the domination of Iranian intellectual traditions, instead of re-establishing its link directly with the Qur'ān and the *hadīth*. Its schoolmen had been giving pride of place to jurisprudence and its principles and theological dialectics which were related more to logical disputations and philosophical discussions rather than rejuvenation of creed based on the Oneness of God.

The deep impress of Indian religious thoughts and philosophies as well as customs and traditions on the Muslim society of India can be seen from the letter* Majadid Alf Thāni wrote to a lady. It shows how, Muslims participated in rituals involving polytheism, considered it permissible to supplicate beings other than God for help in their affairs, participated in idolatrous festivals and followed polytheistic customs and conventions, offered sacrifices of animals to placate the saints, fasted to propitiate different holy men and women and harboured the same credulous beliefs and irrational fear as the Hindus had in regard to *Sitla*, the goddess of small-pox. All these common features of Muslim society which carried weight even with the families of elites and educated persons, were the result of the Muslim intellectual circles not maintaining a direct contact with the Qur'ān and the *hadīth.*

Influences exerted on the Muslim society by their non-Muslim neighbours coupled with general unfamiliarity with the Qur'ān and *hadith* and its teachings, and absence of any effort to take corrective measures, had gone to produce an eclectic Muslim culture challenging the monotheistic creed and Islamic way of life. Shāh Waliullah writes in the *Tafhīmāt :*

> "The Prophet is reported to have said : 'You (Muslims) will take after the ways of the earlier communities and will follow them step by step so that if they enter the burrow of a lizard, you shall also follow suit.' The companions asked, 'O Prophet of Allah, do you mean the Jews and the Christians by earlier communities ?' The Prophet replied, 'Who else !' This *hadīth* has been reported by Bukhāri and Muslim.
>
> "The Prophet was perfectly correct for we have seen Muslims, weaker in faith, who have taken the pious as associates of God and converted the tombs of their saints into places of worship like the Jews and Christians. We have seen men who alter the precepts of the Prophet and impute the dictum to him that 'virtuous are for Allah and the sinners for me.' This

aphorism is similar to what the Jews claim: *The fire will most certainly not touch us for more than a limited number of days.*[9] The fact is that distortion is rampant in every group. Look at the *sūfis* and you will find maxims prevalent amongst them which do not agree with the Qur'ān and the *sunnah.* In regard to *tauhīd*, the Oneness of God in particular, they do seem to be absolutely careless."[10]

In one of his most celebrated works, the *Al-Fauz al-Kabīr*. Shāh Waliullah gives an account of the polytheistic practices of the infidels during the pagan past and then says:

> "If you find it difficult to comprehend the creed and practices of the heathens look at all those who are bent upon defiling their faith although they are living in the land of Islam. See, what concepts they have about the saints of bygone ages. Even if they admit the saintliness of the earlier angelic souls, they consider the existence of such men of God now as improbable yet they keep paying a call on various tombs and shrines, indulging in heretical practices of ascribing divinity to them. They are so carried away by these deviations and delusions that they present a true picture of what the Prophet said: *You will take after the ways of the earlier communities*......There is not a misadventure on which one or the other group of Muslims dares not enter upon or entertains beliefs of a similar nature. May Allah parden all of us."[11]

The Remedial Measure

The remedial measure suggested by Shāh Waliullah for the widespread corruption was study and contemplation on the Qur'ān. It was not his intelligence or academic analysis or ingenuity that led him to this conclusion; it was a self-evident reality, a truth attested by the Qur'ān, the history of Islam and experience of reformative endeavours in the past. The reality of *tauhīd* and *shirk* could not be expounded more forcefully and

convincingly by anything than the Qur'ān itself. Shāh 'Abdul Qādir has expressed this very characteristic of the Book of God in his Urdu rendering of the scripture entitled *Mūzeh al-Qur'ān* in these words :

> "Let those who can explain do it to the best of their ability but none can elucidate like God. No exposition by any one can be as efficacious and moving as the word of God."[12]

During his stay in Hijaz, Shāh Waliullah must have keenly felt the differ nce between the authentic teachings of the Qur'ān and Islam and the practices of Indian Muslims. The cradle of Islam radiant with spiritual effulgence of the Qur'ān, must have given rise to an overpowering impulse in him to make his countrymen familiar with the true teachings of the divine scripture. We can also take it as an inspiration or divine hint usually felt by those purer in spirit for serving the cause of religion. This was perhaps the reason that the Shāh commenced a Persian rendering of the Holy Qur'ān under the title of *Fath ur-Rahmān* after he came back from Hijaz.[13]

India was then intellectually a part of the landmass comprising Turkistan, Iran and Afghanistan ; thoughts and attitudes of its neighbouring countries were exerting influence on the religious and educational circles of India. The then assumption in these lands was that comprehension of the Qur'ān being dependent on a dozen or more branches of learning, only the learned were worthy of devoting themselves to the study of the Qur'ān, scanning its meanings and contemplating upon its hidden wisdom. It was considered dangerous to allow the common people to take up its study or try to imbibe its teachings since that might open the doors of misinformation and blunder. The then scholars also feared that once the commonality had direct access to the Qur'ān, it would start defying the authority of the learned besides getting self-conceited and involved in mental confusion. The dominant thought and the arguments advanced in the matter have been neatly summarised by Shāh Waliullah in one of his brochures entitled *Tuhfah al-Muwahhidin*.[14]

There are people who say that the Qur'ān and the *hadith* can be understood only by one who is conversant with different branches of learning and has studiously gone through a large number of books. In short he should be a master intellect of his age. To these persons God's reply is: *He it is Who hath sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own, to recite unto them His revelations and to purify them and to teach them the Scripture and Wisdom.*"[15]

This means that neither the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) nor his companions knew the art of reading and writing but when the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) recited the Quranic verses before his companions they got themselves disabused of every vile and wrong. So, if an illiterate man cannot understand the Qur'ān and the *hadith*, or is incapable of comprehending its teachings, how the companions were able to get rid of their corruption? Lamentable are those who have the pretentions of getting to the bottom of the *Sidrah* and *Qamūs* but plead their incompetence to follow the Qur'ān and the *hadith*. There are also those amongst them who plead that they are the rearmost of the *ummah*, unblessed with the purity of heart and spirit enjoyed by the companions and contemporaries of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), then how can they grasp the substance of the Qur'ān and the *hadith*. To such persons Allah has already given an answer: *And also others of them who have not yet joined them.*[16] These words read in continuation of the verse cited earlier leave no doubt that all those to come later on, whether they are literate or not, will be cleansed if they decide to learn the Qur'ān and the *hadith* and follow in the footsteps of the Prophet's companions. Allah also says: *And assuredly We have made the Quran easy for admonition; is there*

> *any one who would be admonished.*[17] How fallacious this would be if those learned in the *Kāfiah* and *Shāfiyah* were incompetent to make out its meaning while uncivilized Arabs were able to grasp it. The Qur'ān asks: '*Will they then not meditate on the Qur'ān?*'[18] How could anybody meditate on the Qur'ān if it were not easy or, as the Qur'ān asks, '*are there locks upon their hearts?*[19]' But if there are no locks upon their hearts why have they become so impervious to every argument and evidence inviting them to ponder over the writ of God."[20]

Taking a note of the then anomalous thought and deviant tenor bordering to the Quranic expressions about those who turned away from the way of Allah,[21] the Shāh resolved to render the holy Qur'ān into an easy Persian idiom since it was the official and literary language and was extensively used by the educated people for their correspondence ever since the establishment of Muslim rule in India. Even those who were not so well-versed in Persian could at least follow it thanks to the dominant position enjoyed by it for the last seven hundred years. It would have not been surprising at all if even a dozen of Persian translations had been attempted by that time, but no record of any such rendering exists save one by Hasan b. Muhammad 'Alqami, popularly known as Nizām of Nishāpūr or Daulatābād, who was a scholar of the eighth century Hijrah. This Persian translation by Nishāpurī is included in his Arabic commentary on the holy Qur'ān known as the *Gharā'ib-al-Qur'ān*.[22]

Another Persian translation of the Qurān found in India was commonly attributed to Shaikh S'adi. It was not popular like Sa'di's *Gulistān* and *Bostān*, and was also rare. However, it is incorrect to credit S'adi with this work ;--it was decidedly undertaken by Syed Sharīf 'Ali al-Jurjāni (d. 816/1413). 'Abdul Haq Haqqāni, the author of the *Tafsir-i-Haqqāni* writes in the introduction to his work: "The translation regarded as that by Shaikh S'adi by the ignormuses these days is in reality the work of Syed

Sharif. It was in my presence that the publisher attributed it to Shaikh S'adi just to make it popular."[23]

In short, after five years of his return from Hijaz, and perhaps in consequence of the results achieved through his efforts to rectify the popular creed of the people through sermons and teaching and preaching, the Shāh came to the conclusion that the most potent and effective method of popularising the teachings of the Qur'ān was to have a Persian rendering of the scripture Shāh Waliullah has given a detailed description of the reasons for his venture in the introduction to the *Tafsīr Fath-ur-Rahmān.*

> "The times in which we are living and the country which we inhabit demand that the well-being of Muslims lies in an easy and idiomatic Persian translation of the holy Qur'ān (without burdening it with an exquisite style and unnecessary stories and interpretations) so that it may be easily understood alike both by the commonality and the worthy. All should be able to get at the message of the Qur'ān. Hence the heart of this mendicant was spurred, rather overpowered to take up this job.

> "First of all the existing translations were gone through so that the one measuring up to expectation, and in accordance with the prevailing taste may be published. But these translations either contain tedious details or are crudely sketchy. In the meantime the translation of *Sūratul Baqarah* and *Sūratun Nisa* was completed. Thereafter I happened to proceed for the pilgrimage which disrupted the work. A few years after that a student started studying the Qur'ān under me which revived the earlier resolve. I decided to pen down the translation I had to teach every day and in this way one-third of translation was completed. Then the student had to undertake a journey which again suspended the work. A long time after that the desire to complete the translation was reawakened resulting in completion of two-third of the work.

"Certain friends were then requested to copy the manuscript in a clear hand along with the text These friends started writing in Dhil-Hijja, 1150 (March-April, 1738) which induced me to take up the task again. It was thus completed by the beginning of Ramadhan 1151 (November, 1738) and a clear copy came to be prepared within the same year. The book was released through the efforts of Khwaja Muhammad Amīn, in the year 1156 (1743) when several copies of it were prepared and utilized for teaching the students and the contemporary scholars gave recognition to it."[24]

In addition to the translation and commentary of the Qur'ān Shāh Waliullah also wrote a brochure on the principles of translating the Qur'ān. This work which is small in volume, is very scholarly and thought-provoking The pamphlet starts with the words: "Says this mendicant Waliullah b. 'Abdur Rahīm craving for grace of Merciful God, that this brochure deals with the principles of translation of the Glorious Qur'ān. Its name is Introduction to Principles of Translation and it was written while initiating the translation of the Qur ān."[25]

It seems that the hurdle blocking the way to the translation and propagation of Quranic teachings was removed owing to the step taken by a luminary like Shāh Waliullah (whose encyclopaedia knowledge, sincerity of purpose and perfection of spirit had been unanimously recognised by almost all the scholars of his time). It has happened more than once in the history of Islam that the pioneering action taken by a master spirit of his age has cleared the misplaced apprehensions and doubts and opened the way to the badly needed rejuvenation of the faith. A few glaring examples of it are furnished by Imām Abul Hasan al-Ash'ari's theological discussions employing rational arguments and Imām Gazzali's study and criticism of philosophy.

Subsequent Urdu Translations

The need for an Urdu translation of the Qur'ān began to be felt not long after the Persian translation of Shāh Waliullah.

Urdu had started replacing Persian by the end of the twelfth century and, in fact, some writings in it had appeared by that time.[26] This need of the changing times was first visualized by Shāh Waliullah's son Shāh 'Abdul Qādir (d. 1230/1815). After fifty years of the Persian translation by Shāh Waliullah, Shāh 'Abdur Qādir rendered the Quran into Urdu. This work completed in 1204-5/1790-91 is so idiomatic and graceful that it can safely be claimed that in no other language a translation of the Qur'an exists which has been so successful in employing a form of expression capturing the substance and spirit of the holy scripture. As a prologue to his Urdu rendering of the Qur'ān, Shāh 'Abdul Qādir says: "This feeble slave 'Abdul Qādir thought of making a similar attempt as my respected father Shāh Waliullah son of 'Abdur Rahīm, a native of India and learned in *hadith*, had made by interpreting the Qur'ān in simple Persian. Praise be to Allah that this wish was attained in 1205/1791."[27]

Shāh Raf'i-ud-din (d. 1233/1818), the elder brother of Shāh 'Abdul Qādir attempted another literal translation of the Qur'ān. The erudition and sincerity as well as the judicious carefulness of the author in selection of each word made his translation very popular. Literary circles recognised the merit of both these works, preferring one or the other owing to the distinctive features of each translation.

Both these Urdu renderings gained acceptance among Indian Muslims as standard translations and are normally read by them during recitation of the Qur'ān. In the rectification of creed and propagation of the belief in Divine Unity both have helped innumerable Muslims, perhaps running into several millions. This has been the greatest accomplishment of the three works—by Shāh Waliullah and his two sons—which could have hardly been achieved by any Islamic State with its vast financial resources. All of them were, in truth, the parts of the same heavenly arbour.

Thereafter such a large number of Urdu translations of the Qur'ān came to be made that their enumeration would require a research on the topic.[28]

Quranic Schooling

Apart from the two Urdu translations by the sons of Shāh Waliullah which became common in every Urdu-knowing household of India, the most earnest and prolonged effort to reform the faith and morals of the Muslims through imparting instruction in the Qur'ān was made by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz (d. 1239/1824), a member of the same family, who virtually brought to completion the work initiated by Shāh Waliullah. He continued to provide coaching in the Qur'ān for about 62 years in Delhi, the metropolis of India, at a time so trying as the thirteenth century hijrah. The popularity his lectures gained and the immensely important task of rectifying Islamic creed of the wayward masses achieved through his instruction can hardly be assessed by anybody.

Al-Fauz-al-Kabīr

A unique work in Islamic literature, as *Al-Fauz-al-Kabīr* is, it has succeeded in edifying the scholars about the correct approach to understand the meanings and message of the Qur'ān as well as in awakening the impulse to work for reform and revival among the Muslims.

The works available on the principles of exegesis are generally sketchy, not going beyond a few obvious rules and propositions or a description of the methodology adopted by an exegete in his interpretation of the Quranic verses. Although Shāh Waliullah's *Al-Fauz-al-Kabīr* is of a modest size, it deals with fundamental rules and criteria on the subject. The difficulties felt in the task and the solutions proposed by the great scholar can be fully appreciated only by those who have an experience of this delicate and baffling task. The book contains clues and dictums, based on personal experiences and inspirations of the Shāh, which will not be found even by going through hundreds of pages written by others. He is exceptionally factual in stating the reason for compilation of this work in its preface:

> "This beggar Waliullah b. 'Abdur Rahīm (with whom Allah may deal graciously) states that when Allah

> opened the door of discernment of the Qur'ān for this mendicant, he had an impulse to scribe some of the useful hints (helpful to people in comprehension of the Qur'ān) in a slim volume. It is hoped that with the grace of Allah students would find in it a way so clear for grasping the meanings of the Qur'ān as may not be available to them even after spending a life-time in the study of commentaries and writings of exegetes (of which a few are nowadays to be found).[29]

A concise description of matters like the topics dealt with in the Qur'ān and their purpose, the form and style of the scripture, the characteristics that distinguish it from all other human writings and the relevance of the occasions leading to revelation of particular verses may not appear to be uncommon today—though there may still be people who may be unfamiliar with them—but these were certainly singular and innovative in the twelfth century hijrah. Undue importance then given to the occasion of revelation of each verse and the lengthy description of such events and occurrances had become a common design of the medieval commentaries with the result that a veil had been thrown over the lesson to be drawn from the Quranic description of certain events and their application to issues in different times and circumstances. Shāh Waliullah criticized this trend which helped to uncover the message of the Qur'ān meant for all times and climes. In the first chapter of the *Al-Fauz-al-Kabīr* Shāh Waliullah writes:

> "The commentators of the Qur'ān have generally dovetailed every verse whether relating to a discourse or a legal ruling with a story shedding light on the event leading to revelation of that passage. But the truth is that the ultimate objective of Quranic revelations is disciplining of human disposition and rectification of man's errant beliefs and morals. For the theologians have presumed the existence of erratic beliefs for the revelation of verses dealing with articles

> of faith, loose morals and offensive ways for the revelation of legal commandments, and the depiction of death and after-life for revelation of the verses of admonition and warning. Thus all those particular events and occurrances are not necessarily relevant to every Quranic verse save in the case of a few which allude to any incident either during the time of the Prophet or before him.'[30]

The key to the comprehension of the Qur'ān lies in a correct understanding of the aberrant beliefs of the people censured by the Qur'ān, their historical background and the reasons for their weaknesses and delusions and the competence to identify those traits in the misguided Muslim sects. Shāh Waliullah has succeeded in delineating all these matters, albeit briefly, but in a way that one cannot hope to find even in voluminous commentaries of the Qur'ān.

In his discussion on the abrogation of certain verses, Shāh Waliullah has made valuable additions by clarifying the terminological differences between the ancient and medieval scholars harmonising the abrogating and the abrogated verses and reconciling the differences between the interpretations of the Prophet's companions and their successors.

Shāh Waliullah's elucidation of the apparent violation of accepted rules of syntax by certain Quranic verses can be appreciated by those only who are aware of the history of the compilation of rules of grammar as well as the differences between the linguistic schools of Basra and Kūfa. In short a distinctive feature of this slim volume is that it highlights the fallacies and waywardness of earlier religious communities and sects. This helps us to compare their weaknesses and belmishes with the errant ways adopted by the Muslim society in subsequent times and climes. It thus enables one to diagnose their maladies and find necessary remedial measures in the light of the Quranic revelations. The Qurān has, indeed, alluded to it.

> "Now we have revealed unto you a Scripture wherein is your Reminder. Have ye then no sense?"[31]

Scrutiny of the Doctrine of Tauhīd

Shāh Waliullah did not limit himself to the teaching of the Qur'ān or its rendering into Persian for propagation of the accepted creed in the Oneness of God. He also undertook an scholarly analysis of the concept to show that monotheism was a distinguishing feature and the end of prophetic call given by the great patriarch, Prophet Ibrāhīm, which culminated in the mission of the last Prophet Muhammad. The entire Qur'ān, the collections of *hadīth* and life of the Prophet bear witness to this fact. The Prophet elucidated the reality of *tauhīd* and drew such a clear dividing line between absolute monotheism and polytheism, through his toils and exertions against the tiniest trace of polytheism, that nothing more to shield his followers against the corruption of their creed was conceivable.[32] All these are well-known facts requiring no illustration or argument to prove them. Anyone familiar with the Qur'ān and the *hadīth* will find no difficulty in accepting these facts.

How it was, then, that after the conclusion of the age of virtuous generations polytheistic beliefs and practices gained an entrance into the Muslim society? How some of the educated persons dared condone all these deviations and even tried to vindicate them? How these educated Muslims were taken in at all?

Failure to understand the reality of *tauhīd*, the one ess of God, and absence of a clear concept about God being the Creator and Sustainer of the universe among the pagan Arabs were, according to Shāh Waliullah, the reasons for this aberration. A great majority of the people mistook *shirk* or polytheism as taking some one (living or lifeless) as a partner or to equate it with God. They meant by it assignment of such divine attributes and functions as raised some one, in one way or the other, to the level of Supreme Creator. Provider or Destroyer. They thought that vesting of certain subordinate divine functions to a godly soul by way of helping God in the governance of the world or his being empowered by God to perform certain specified tasks did not amount to *shirk* or denial of *tauhid*. Similarly,

reverential regard for anyone because of one's propinquity to God, even if it were similar to acts falling within the ambit of divine service, was not taken as *shirk* by them; these were, in their view simply means to attain the pleasure of God for He could not be approached directly by the humble and the lowly without any intermediary. The Arab pagans did in fact say:

> "We serve them only that they may bring us nearer to God."[33]

This was a fallacy or rather an illusion which had led large numbers among the Muslims to the prohibited territory of *shirk*. They had crossed the line of demarcation separating monotheism and polytheism. In order to fully comprehend the reasons for it an examination of the creeds and belief of the polytheists in the Age of Ignorance would be essential. What were their concepts about the Being and Attributes of God and whether they held God as the Creator of universe and its Absolute Ruler are the matters to be explored. And, if the replies to these questions are in affirmative then why did the Prophet took them as polytheists and why did the Qur'ān proclaim them as practising *shirk*?

Shāh Waliullah discussed these issues in the *Al-Fauz-al-Kabīr fi Usūl-al-Tafsīr*. He says:

> "It is *shirk* to credit anyone with an attribute exclusive to God as, for example, assigning anyone God's Will alluded to in the Qur'ān as 'Be, and it becomes'; or considering one to possess inherent knowledge unattainable through one's senses, intellect, dream or intuition; or believing anyone to have the power to cure the sick; or maintaining that reduction in circumstances, illness or difficulty depends on the curse or displeasure of any one; or conversely acquiring affluence, health and happiness to be the outcome of anyone's blessings.
>
> "The polytheists, too, never associated anyone with God in the creation of planets or performance of similar

exalted tasks. They believed that when God contemplates doing anything nobody has the power to stall Him. Their polytheism related to matters connected with the functions of certain individuals. They presumed that the way emperors appointed viceroys from amongst their courtiers and councellors to administer different parts of their realm, empowered them to decide cases according to their own light in the absence of specific royal directions, left the conduct of affairs to them and acted on their recommendations in regard to their subordinates, God also endued His elects with some of the divine functions. In their view the pleasure or displeasure of such angelic souls being efficacious for others, it was necessary to gain accessibility to them so as to win acceptability in the divine presence and have the benefit of the intercession of godly souls at the time of final Reckoning. These illusions led them to legitimatize prostration, offering of sacrifices, taking of oath and seeking the help of these saintly persons. Then they took to carving of their stone, copper and zink images in order to meditate on and propitiate their souls but gradually the ignormuses came to hold those stones as the deity. Thus ensued the great departure from monotheism."[34]

Shāh Waliullah further elucidates the point in his *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*.

"The reality of *shirk* consists of entertaining a belief, about any one held in esteem, that his marvellous deeds or miracles worked by him are the result of his being endowed with one of those sublime faculties which are not possessed by ordinary human beings, but are exclusive to the Almighty God. This can be possible only if God confers divinity on one of His creatures, or he attains extinction in the Being of God, or else there is any similar reason assumed by a credulous person. The words of *talbia*, uttered by

the pagans while performing *haj*, which have been preserved in the *hadith* literature, illustrate the creed held by them before embracing Islam. They used to chant: 'Here I am at Thy service; O Lord! Here I am at Thy service; There is no partner unto Thee save the one elected by Thee; Thou art his Lord and of all that he possesses' This examplifies why a devotee abases himself and glorifies the person whom he deems as sharing divinity and adores him in the way human beings should serve Almighty God.'[35]

Shāh Waliullah has mentioned at another place in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* that pagans of pre-Islamic Arabia agreed with the Muslims on certain aspects of the Divine Being. They never denied the existence of God and His uniqueness and omnipotence. They simply considered those whom they deemed as elects and favourites of God to have been assigned with a share in certain Divine attributes and functions, and hence exalted them in the way they glorified the Almighty.

In the section dealing with *tauhīd* the Shāh writes in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*:

"Polytheists accepted, like Muslims, that in the performance of great tasks, resolved or intended, by God Almighty, no option was left with anybody. But in other matters they took a view divergent from the Muslims in as much as they held that the pious souls of olden times had, by virtue of their intensive devotions, been granted divinity by God. This made them eligible to divine honours which ought to be paid to them by other creations, much in the same way as a slave becomes qualified to hear and accept the petitions of the people over whom he is appointed as a governor by a king. They believed that benedictions to the Lord received divine acceptance only when these were accompanied by invocatious to such pious souls, for, in truth and reality, God is so Lofty, so High and Mighty that the prayers addressed directly to

Him do not find admittance before Him. It was, therefore, essential that these holy persons should be adored so that they may pass on the petitions of their devotees to God. They imagined that the elects of God saw and listened the devotions addressed to them, interceded on behalf of their devotees, managed their affairs and helped them in difficulties. The chiselled stones were meant to keep their memory fresh and hence they meditated on them. Those who came after them did not differentiate between the idols and the persons whom they took as the elects of God, and adored the idols as their deities."[36]

At another place the Shāh writes:

"The pagans of Arabia were convinced that no created being was an associate of God in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the frames and substances in between the two. Similarly, they agreed, none shared any power with God in the accomplishment of extraordinary tasks, nor anybody had the power to delay or stall the decision once taken by God. God says in the Qur'ān, 'If thou shouldest ask them: Who created the heavens and the earth? they would answer: Allah."[37]

"The Qur'ān itself testifies that the pagans placed reliance on God and also beseeched Him. "Nay, but unto Him ye call......and yet forget whatever partner ye ascribe unto Him."[38]

"And again: ".........all unto whom ye cry fail save Him."[39]

"Deviation and disbelief of the pagans of Arabia was, in reality, because of their conviction that there were certain angels and pious souls which managed everyday affairs of their devotees and solved the personal problems relating to their children and possessions, barring, of course, tasks of higher category. They imagined that the relationship between God and these

guardian souls was comparable to that of a pampered slave with his master or of the courtiers and councellors with a despotic emperor. According to divine dispensation certain functions were deemed to have been entrusted by God to one angel or the other, or God answered the entreaties of certain pious souls. But these ignormuses had drawn an inference that those angels or saints were fully competent to do anything they desired, just like the king himself. This amounted to assuming something non-existent as existent, and that was really the root cause of their going astray."[40]

Similarly, Shāh Waliullah analysed and identified the causes responsible for polytheistic beliefs of the commonality and those of the educated class which represented it. He unmasked their fallacies which had led the illiterates, and some even among the educated, to swallow such credulous beliefs as offering of prayers and oblations to beings other than God, keeping fast to propitiate the saints, imploring godly souls of the old for seeking their help, treating their shrines and everything connected therewith as venerable like the two sacred Mosques, deeming them entitled to make minor changes in the divine dispensation and authorised to dole out hardship and ease, illness and health, adversity and prosperity. These persons depending on polytheistic dogmas disregard the divine command to 'worship Allah, making religion pure for Him only.'[41] They miss the merits of sincerity in faith, reliance on Allah and devotion to Him. Their notions and persuations remind one of the Quranic dictum : "And most of them believe not in Allah except that they attribute partners (unto Him)"[42]

Had Shāh Waliullah and his successors not directed their efforts to anything save what they did to examine, elucidate and propagate the accurate precept in regard to Oneness of God, and to expose the fallacies of the misguided masses, he would have perfectly been entitled to be treated as the renovator of his age. He has, however, many more accomplishments to his

credit which would be discussed in the succeeding sections.

Exact Discernment of Islamic Creed

Apart from this fundamental reformative work performed by Shāh Waliullah, which was indeed essential for the guidance of the Muslim society on the right path—a condition indispensable for becoming entitled to divine succour and grace—it was also an achievement that he undertook an intellectual appraisal of the Islamic creed, elucidated it in the light of the Qur'ān and *sunnah* and invited the people to adopt the practice of the companions and their successors. He also acted on his precepts and presented a model to be emulated by others. The world of Islam then needed a leading light whose soundness of faith was unimpeachable and who could confute and contradict the subtle quibblings of the philosophers about religious truths. Such a man had to possess an unflinching faith in Quranic revelations in regard to the Being and Attributes of God and other spiritual realities and, at the same time, was gifted to elucidate them in the language of the logicians and philosophers. The Prophet of Islam is related to have declared that such rightguided scholars will be "those who would protect the religion from exaggerations of the credulous, innovations of the undevout and misinterpretations of the ignorants."[43]

There has never been a time when Islam had no such academicians to serve its cause. There had lately been Shaikhul Islām Hāfiz Ibn Taimiyah Harrāni (d. 728/1328) during the eighth century of Hijrah and, after him, his illustrious disciple Ibn Qayyim Jauziyah (d. 791/1389) who wrote the *Zād-al-Ma'ād* and a few other prominent scholars.

Shāh Waliullah can be cited with full confidence as next only to Imām Ibn Taimiyah. His intellectual endeavours have already earned the recognition of scholars. He was fully competent to spell out the Islamic creed as comprehended by the earliest Muslims in a language that could be grasped by his contemporary scholastics. He had delved deep into the Greek philosophy and theological dialectics. He was, at the same time, an authority

on the Qur'ān and *hadīth* with an exceptional insight into the *sharī'ah*. If he was an expert in elucidation of religious truths, he also knew how to be simple, plain and accurate in his expression. His *Al-Aqīdata al-Hasanah*[44] is a model of deep and abstruse thoughts expressed in a simple and easy style. The work deals with the branch of Islamic learning known as *Ilm-i-Tauhīd* (or the science normally forming part of theological dialectics) and covers all the tenets of faith deemed essential by the Ahl-i-Sunnat school and of which every educated Muslim has necessarily to be conversant.

In one of his short works written under the tittle of *Wasāyā*[45] (The Will) Shāh Waliullah writes':

> "My foremost wish is that both in creed and deeds one should always be firm on the scripture and the *sunnah*. In regard to tenets of faith, the doctrines held by the earliest Muslims should be preferred and in case they have left anything (of the Divine Attributes or allegorical verses) unexplored, one should better refrain from attempting to elucidate them. The dubious ratiocinations of the logicians need not be given any heed."

The approach and outlook of Shāh Waliullah in regard to Divine Names and Attributes is made clear from the following extract taken from the *Hujjat-Allāh-al-Bāligha*.

> "God is beyond and superior enough to be discerned by intellect or senses. His attributes are not so embeded in His Being as properties are found in the matter, nor are these of the type that can be comprehended by reason and expressed in words familiar to us. Nonetheless, it is also essential that people should know all these things so that humanity is enabled to attain as much perfection as is possible for it. This being the case, there is no alternative but to express Divine Attributes with the use of words that indicate their collaterals and consequences, as, for instence, we evince 'mercy' for God, but it means an outflow of

grace and compassion and not the feeling of kindness (although this inclination really means mercy) felt in one's heart. Similarly, in order to convey the omnipotence of God we are bound to make use of the words denoting power and authority of man. This is because we do not have words better than these to articulate the purport. In this way a lot of words would be employed allegorically but with the reservation that they are not meant to convey their literal sense—the drift being to express the concepts suitable to the Exalted Being of God.........All the revealed religions are agreed that the words used so far to convey the Divine Attributes shall continue to be employed without making any further research into the precise sense of such words. This was the prevailing view of the times spoken of as the best of all ages (that is, upto the time of the successors of the companions). Later on people came up among the Muslims who started giving thought to the matter without regard to the textual authority or adequate justification for their effort."[46]

The entire world of Islam, particularly those countries which had succumbed to intellectual and cultural influence of Iran had, for the past several hundred years, yielded virtually to a sort of mental serfdom to Greek philosophy. Their hairsplittings and ratiocinations had invented explanations for Divine Attributes which had rendered them meaningless. They had nothing but contempt for the scholars of old; those who were moderate used to remark with an air of judicious reserve: 'The scholars of old were discreet but the moderns are scientific in their quest.' Shāh Waliullah's attitude about Divine Attributes in this overview of his time was exceptionally daring as well as calculated to reform the ill-conceived notions prevalent among the Muslims.

Shāh Waliullah's own bent of mind approving the older school of thought in regard to Divine Names and Attributes, his disinclination towards he views of philosophers and theological

scholastics whose hair-splittings very often divested the Divine Being of all power and authority, and the great regard he had for the *hadith* and *sunnah* of the holy Prophet led him to recognise the greatness of Ibn Taimiyah and defend him against his detractors. Ibn Taimiyah had, in the immediate past, been severely censured, but Shāh Waliullah paid glowing tribute to him in the *Tafhimāt-i-Ilāhiyah*.

> "Nothing in the writings of Ibn Taimiyah is unsupported by textual authority from the scripture and the *sunnah* or the practice of the earliest Muslims. He was an scholar of exceptional abilities. Is there anybody who can be compared with him either in speech or writing ? Those who have decried him do not possess even one-tenth of Ibn Taimiyah's talents."[47]

Notes and References

1. *A Guidebook for Muslims*, Lucknow, 1985, p. 32. The view expressed here is illustrated in the work with Quranic verses and events in the life of the holy Prophet.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.
3. Q. 3 : 139.
4. Q. 24 : 55.
5. S. Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi, *Islamic Concept of Prophethood*, Lucknow, 1979, p. 52.
6. S. Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi, *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. II (Lucknow 1974). p. 73.
7. *Saviours of Islamic Spirit* Vol. II, op-cit., pp. 74, 76, 80.
8. *Maktūbāt-i-Imām Rabbāni*, Vol. III, letter No. 41.
9. Q. 2 : 80.
10. *At-Tafhimāt-i-Ilāhiya*, Vol. II, pp. 134-35.
11. *Al-Fauz al-Kabīr*, pp. 8-9.
12. Shāh 'Abdul Qādir, *Mūzeh al-Qur'ān*, Introduction.
13. The author of the *Hayāt-i-Wali* says on the basis of what he heard from one of his contemporaries that the Shāh had undertaken the journey to Hijaz since his translation of the Qur'ān into Persian had caused a tumult against him among the ignorant people. He also narrates a story of murderous attack on the Shāh (pp. 418-423).
    However, the story is not substantiated from any other source.

Introduction to the *Fath-ur-Rahmān* specifies that Shāh Waliullah initiated the work on 10th Dhil Hijja 1150 A. H. (13th March, 1738) and concluded it in 1151/1739. This means that the Shāh took up the translation four or five years after he returned from Hijaz. I have a two volume handwritten copy of the *Fath-ur-Rahmān* in my private library. It was personally presented by the Shāh to Muhammad 'Āzam 'Uthmāni Nasirābādi, one of our forbears devoted to the Shāh. Muhammad 'Āzam was brought up by Syed Muhammad N'omān, the uncle of Syed Ahmad Shahid. This manuscript was inherited by Syed Qutb-ul-Huda who was a disciple of Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz, and then it found its way to the private library of my father Hakim Syed 'Abdul Hai. It was copied in 1165/ 755, that is, eleven years before the Shāh breathed his last. Before the Shāh left for Hijaz he had translated only parts of *Sūratul Baqarah* and *Sūratun Nisa.*

14. This brochure has been published as one of Shāh Waliullah's works although we do not find it mentioned in other works or biographies of Shāh Waliullah. May be that it was omitted since it was a small brochure, but its style and the thought contained in it represents the Shāh's views on the subject.
15. Q. 62 : 2.
16. Q. 62 : 3
17. Q. 54 : 22
18. Q. 47 : 24
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Tuhfah-al-Muwahhidīn*, Al-Maktaba Salfiah, Lahore, pp. 5-7.
21. Q. 7 : 45
22. *'Ja'iza Tarājim-i-Qur'āni*, Deoband, pp. 13-14.
23. 'Abdul Haq Haqqāni, *Al-Bayān fi-Uloom-al-Qur'ān*, Introduction, pp. 507.
24. Shāh Waliullah, Introduction to *Fathur Rahmān*, Delhi, 1294 A. H.
25. Appendage of *Fath-ur-Rahmān*, MSS Nadwatul Ulama.
26. Ahsan Mārehrivi, *Tārikh Nasr-i-Urdu*, pp. 74-77.
27. 'Abdul Qādir, *Mūzeh-al-Qur'ān*, Vol. I, p. 2.
28. The World Bibliography of the Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Quran (Istanbul, 1986) lists 159 complete and 309 incomplete Urdu translations of the Qur'ān. According to this work Shāh 'Abdul Qādir's translation has seen 22 reprints and that of Shāh Raf'i-Ud-din was printed 28 times by 1980.

29. *Al-Fauz-al-Kabir.*
30. *Al-Fauz-al-Kabir*, p. 3-4.
31. Q. 21 : 10.
32. The Prophet's directives in regard to assemblage on graves, celebrations over them, reverential prostration, disallowing the taking of oaths in the name of anyone save God, etc., are some of the examples. The Prophet even showed displeasure when a Bedouin remarked, "As Allah and you wish". He remonstrated with the Bedouin, saying, "You have equated me with God. No, say : What God Wills."
33. Q. 39 : 3.
34. *Al-Fauz al-Kabir*, pp. 7-8.
35. *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, Vol. I, p. 61.
36. *Ibid*, p. 59.
37. Q. 31 : 25
38. Q. 6 : 41
39. Q. 17 : 67
40. *Hujjat Allah al-Bāligha*, Vol I, p. 125.
41. Q. 39 : 2
42. Q. 12 : 106
43. *Baihaqi.*
44. This work was first published by Matb'a Mufid-i-'Ām, Agra. Later on late Muhammad Owais Nadwi, then Prof. of Tafsīr in Nadwatul Ulama added commentaries to the original, mostly from other writings of Shāh Waliullah, which was published under the title in *Al-Aqīdata al-Sunniyah* 1382/1962 from Lucknow. The first volume of *Tafhimāt-i- Ilāhiyah* contains the entire *Al-'Aqidata al-Hasanah* and hence it seems that the latter was extracted from the former for being brought out separately in the form of a brochure. Those interested can see the author's *A Guidebook for Muslims* which gives a summary of this work.
45. The collection of Shāh Waliullah's Persian articles entitled *Al-Mirāt al-Wadhīyata al-Nasīhata wa al-Wasīyata* contains this tract also.
46. *Hujjatallah-al-Bāligha*, Vol. I, p. 63.
47. *Jala'al-'Ainain*, p. 64 (cited from *Tafhimāt-i-Ilāhiya*).

VI

Propagation of Hadith and Co-ordination of Hadith & Fiqh

Significance of Hadith

Shāh Waliullah's endeavour to propagate *hadith* through revival of its teaching and writing monumental works on the subject, set afoot the process of Islamic revival in the Indian sub-Continent or rather in the whole Islamic world during the present era (which begins by the middle of the twelfth century of hijrah and continues to the present day). It was such a great achievement that overshadowed all of his literary and intellectual attainments, and he came to be known as the *Muhaddith Dehlavi* (The Traditionist of Delhi) which really became an adjunct to his name.

But, before the story of Shāh Waliullah's great achievement in this field is recounted, it would be worthwhile to understand the role *hadīth* has played in maintaining the correct Islamic attitude and spirit, why its teaching and preaching is necessary for the Muslims in every time and clime and what disastrous results can follow if indifference is shown to it. The writer of these lines would like to present a few selections from one of his writings penned on this topic.[1]

Hadith: The Touchstone of Perfection

"The sayings and practices of the holy Prophet constitute a

standard, an exact scale by which the later reformers and revivalists of faith can measure the doctrines and disciplines and the norms and usages of public life of their own times, and can find out the errors and deviations made by the community during its long journey through time and space. Likewise, it is essential for the right and proper functioning of public morality and virtuous behaviour of the individuals that both the Qur'ān and the *ahādith* should be kept in view to draw out the rules of conduct. Had there been no record of the Prophet's instructions and his public and private conduct, exerting a steadying and moderating influence, the followers of Islam would have, like the adherents of other religions, gone to the extremes in their beliefs and observances and strayed from the middle and narrow path. Thus, a living personality, rather than an abstract maxim is held up as an ideal to set the pace of life in Islam. The Qur'ān tells the Muslims: *Assuredly in the Apostle of Allah you have an excellent pattern,*[2] and urges them to take his life as a model in every little detail with the soul-stirring words: *Say, If you love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you, forgive you your sins.*[3] The holy Prophet of Islam is, in truth and reality, the great exemplar needed by mankind for gaining strength and confidence in betaking the path of virtue and goodness.

"The actions and sayings of the Prophet are life-giving, effective and weighty which have always helped the people to exercise self-criticism and urged them to fight against iniquity and evil, deviations and innovations in the religious norms and usages of the private and public life. They have given birth to virtuous persons in every age and country who have taken upon themselves the task of reform and revivalism, relentlessly fought superstitious beliefs and erroneous doctrines and invited the people back to the Islamic way of life. The *ahādith* of the Prophet have, for that reason, always remained the sheet-anchor of every Muslim community: their diligent preservation, propagation and study is a requisite for the continuity of social, cultural, intellectual, moral and spiritual standards of Islamic way of life.

Evidence Furnished by History

"The truth of the matter is that the *sunnah* of the Prophet preserved in numerous collections of *aḥādīth*, has always been the fountain of genuine Islamic thought as well as the passionate desire to reform and renovate the Muslim society. It is the *ḥadīth* from which the reformers born from time to time were able to get an accurate knowledge of Islamic faith and thought; from it they acquired their thesis and arguments and on it they have always relied upon for the defence of their stand. It has also been the inspirational force behind their fervid enthusiasm to invite the people back to the true faith and to fight every unsound norm and usage. And so it shall remain to the end of time for any one desiring to take up a reformatory undertaking in order to forge a link between the lives of the people in his day and the perfect example of the holy Prophet. He shall have to take recourse to *ḥadīth* if he wants to cater for the changing needs of society in accordance with the principles of faith and morality as enunciated by Islam.

"History of Muslim societies in different parts of the world bears witness to the fact that whenever the Muslims have neglected the study of *ḥadīth* for a considerable length of time, new aberrations and innovations, extraneous doctrines and usages and foreign influences have found their way into the lives of the Muslims notwithstanding the existence of spiritual guides and religious teachers, on the one hand, and powerful and affluent Muslim kingdoms, on the other. These alien thoughts and practices have very often threatened to transform and distort the Muslim society on the pattern of un-Islamic community of the pagan past, as if fulfilling the foreboding of the holy Prophet that 'you would follow in the footsteps of the bygone nations.'[4] These have been the times when the lamp of reform and renovation seemed to be flickering.

"Take for instance the religious and social condition of the Indian Muslims during the tenth century of Islamic era when religious and intellectual circles in that sub-continent had almost severed their connections with the *ḥadīth* and its authentic

sources. They had, during the period, no contact with the centres of religious learning in Hijaz, Yemen, Egypt and Syria where the study of *hadīth* was still pursued. Educational institutions in India were then vigorously cultivating *fiqh* (law), *usūl* (jurisprudence), logic and philosophy but unsound usages had gained popularity, heterodoxy was a common spectacle and numerous unorthodox forms of seeking communion with God had been invented. In the third volume of the *Saviours of Islamic Spirit* I have taken stock of the teachings of Indian mystics and written about the *Jawāhar i-Khamsa* of an eminent and popular Sufi Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth of Gwalior.

"......The orientation of life in all its aspects as dictated by the authentic sayings and practices of the Prophet, attempted by these scholars ('Ali Muttaqi of Burhānpūr and Muhammad Tāhir of Patan) in Gujarat, was unknown to other parts of the country; nor did the people knew anything about the *Sihāh Sittah*[5] or about the scholars who had devoted their lives to the study of *hadīth* and rebuttal of unsound norms and usages. The *Jawāhar-i-Khamsa* by a celebrated Shattari mystic, Shaikh Muhammad Ghauth of Gwalior, offers the best example of the then *sūfi* thought which was permeated with the indigenous theosophic doctrines and practices. The articulate structure of sufistic precepts and cults propounded in this book are based entirely on the supposed utterances of the earlier mystics or the personal experiences of the author, who, it seems, did not consider it necessary to deduce these precepts from any authentic collection of *hadīth* or any book dealing with the Prophet's life and character. Being a collection of orisons for special occasions and for specific purposes, it includes supplications for offering *namāz-i ahzāb* (prayer of confederates), *salāt-al 'ashiqīn* (prayer of the lovers), *namāz-i-tanvīr-ul-qabr* (prayer for grave's illumination) and a number of other devotions and supplications meant for different months of the year that cannot be traced to any saying or doing of the Prophet of Islam,"[6]

"The *Jawāhar-i-Khamsa* is not the solitary example of this kind. In numerous biographical accounts of saints, hagiogra-

phies and collections of their tabletalks one can find similar unauthorised practices commended by them. Of the times we are talking about such practices as complimentary prostration before the mystic Shaikhs and their graves, lighting of candles at sepulchrul monuments, laying of wreaths on the graves of saints and showing the same reverential regard to them as to the holy mosque of Mecca, celebrations like musical concerts, keeping of fasts and offering sacrifices to propitiate the saints, holding of fairs to commemorate their birth and death anniversaries were a common sight—in most of these ceremonies the saints were so exalted as if they were co-sharers of God in governance of the world."[7]

"......Had these numerous compilations of *hadīth*, giving an insight into the difference between the sound and unsound creeds and usages, not been available to the scholars, the successive chain of reformers and revivalists from Shaikh-ul-Islām Ibn Taimiyah (d. 728/1328) to Hakīm-ul-Islām Shāh Waliullah (d. 1176/1762) would never have come forth."[8]

"If one goes through the biographies and the writings of the tenth and eleventh century scholars of Afghanistan, one would find that little attention was paid by the then scholars to the commendation of the *sunnah* and repudiation of unorthodox precepts and practices, nor was any effort made by them to analyse and investigate these issues. Then, Mulla 'Ali Qāri b. Sultān Muhammad (d. 1014/1605) suddenly appeared on the scene who went to Hijaz for the study of the *hadīth* under some reputed scholars. He returned after drinking deep in that branch of learning and then he took up the task of expounding matters relating to *hadīth* and *fiqh*, put up a front against the unsound practices that were commonly in vogue and endeavoured to reform the society of its ills. His probity and courage led him to defend Shaikh-ul-Islām Ibn Taimiyah and to boldly affirm that the Shaikh-ul-Islām was a savant with a pious soul who should be reckoned among the saints of Islam."[9]

Almost the same type of development took place in several Arab countries like Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Tunis Algeria and

Moracco where study of *hadith* prepared the ground for reform and rejuvenation of the Muslim Society.

Science of Hadith and the Arabs

History of Islam bears out the fact that the science of ***hadith*** flourished only in those countries where Islam was taken by the Arabs. It was because of the attachment of the Arabs to the blessed Prophet, their strong memory and realistic and practical approach in safeguarding the frontiers of faith. They always encouraged its teaching and literary endeavours related to it within their sphere of influence. Yemen, Hadharmaut, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, North Africa and Andalus (Spain) are some of the countries which witnessed this development. Even Gujarat, in India, furnishes a similar example which gave birth to such eminent scholars of *hadith* as Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi of Burhānpūr (the author of *Kanz-al-Ummal* d. 975/1568) and Shaikh Muhammad Tāhir of Patan (author of *Majm'a Bahār al-Anwār*). Gujarat, in comparison to the rest of the country, was more in contact with Hijāz and had also the privilege of frequently receiving Arab scholars.

The position was different in the countries which received the message of Islam through non-Arabs. Turks and Afghans established their kingdoms in the main-land of India while mystics and scholars who, too, ethnically belonging to these races had migrated from Iran or Turkistan, preached Islam among the local population. But, when the time came for organising educational activites and drawing up curricula for tuitional purposes, these were unduly influenced by non-Arab scholars, or, to be specific, Iranian philosophers and logicians. In an earlier section we have already described how Iran, which had been the motherland of some of the greatest scholars of *hadith*, had broken its relationship with this branch of science in consequence of the establishment of Safawid rule and conversion of its people to the Shi'ite faith in the beginning of the tenth century of Hijrah. There was thus no possibility of *hadith* being studied in Indian educational circles or being given any consi-

deration that might lead to its prominence. Conversely, the more the Iranian intellectual influence was getting stronger in India, the more indifference to *hadīth* was growing among the Indian scholars. In the twelfth century of Hijrah, when Shāh Waliullah arrived on the scene, this development had touched its climax.

Hadīth in India

Hakim Syed ʿĀbdul Ha'i has given a condensed account of the rise and fall of *hadīth* studies in his *As Thaqāfat-al Islāmia fi-al-Hind.* The excerpt given here from it covers the development extending to several hundred years.

> "After the Arab domination over Sind came to an end, Ghaznavid and Ghūrid sultans established their hold over that province. There was then an inflow of scholars from Khurasan and Transoxania causing a decline in the study of *hadīth* which gradually became almost extinct. Poetry, astrology and mathematics among intellectual sciences and law and jurisprudence among Islamic branches of learning gained popularity among the people. This situation continued for long and ultimately Greek philosophy became the main pursuit of Indian scholars. Indifference to Quranic exegesis and *hadīth* became common. A little part of these two subjects directly connected with the legal issues came to be deemed sufficient by the academicians. It was customary, in those days, to leaf through *Mashāriq-al-Anwār* of Imām Saghānī, for making the grade as a scholar of *hadīth.* If any one desired to go in for further studies in the subject, he deemed it sufficient to go through Imām Baghawi's *Misābīh-us-Sunnah* or the *Mishkāt.* Any one who had studied these books was taken for a scholar of *hadīth.* This was because the people were ignorant of the worth and merit of the *hadīth.* In fact, the people were generally unfamiliar with the *hadīth* and

they hardly knew anything about its great masters. A few scholars read the *Mishkāt* just out of pious sentiment. They valued the study of law as a matter of convention and not for delving deep into its issues. This gave an occasion to compilations of juristic opinions of the earlier juris-consults with little attention being given to the well-defined commands and injunctions of the Qur'ān. Nobody ever bothered to further examine or reconcile such juristic opinions with the Qur'ān and the *Hadīth.*

"Then a time came when God caused this branch of learning to become a popular subject of study. In the tenth century of Hijrah a number of scholars of *hadīth* came to India. Some of these were :

1. Shaikh 'Abdul Mu'aiti Makki b. Hasan b. 'Abdullah Bākathīr (d. Ahmadabad, 989/1581).
2. Shihāb Ahmad Misri b. Badr-ud-din (d. Ahmadabad, 992/1584).
3. Shaikh Muhammad Fākhi Hanbali b. Ahmad b. 'Ali (d. Ahmadabad, 992/1584).
4. Shaikh Muhammad Māliki Misri b. Muhammad 'Abdur Rahmān (d. Ahmedabad, 919/1513).
5. Shaikh Raf'i-ud-din Chishti Shirāzi, (d. Akbarabad, 954/1547).
6. Shaikh Ibrahim Baghdādi b. Ahmad b. Hasan.
7. Shaikh Ziā-ud-din Madni (d Kakori, Lucknow).
8. Shaikh Bahlol Badakhshi, Khwājā Mir Kalān Harwi (d. Akbarabad, 981/1573).

'A few scholars of India also visited Makkah and Medina where they acquired proficiency in *hadīth.* On their return they continued to teach the subject in Gujarat for a long time, but eventually went back to Hijaz. These were: Shaikh Y'aqūb b. Hasan Kashmiri (d. 1003/1595), Shaikh Jauhar Kashmiri (d. 1026/1617), Shaikh 'Abdun Nabi Gangohi b. Ahmad, Shaikh 'Abdullah Sultānpūri b. Shams-ud-din, Shaikh Qutb-

ud-din 'Abbāsi Gujarati, Shaikh Ahmad b. Ismā'il Mandwi, Shaikh Rājeh b. Dāwūd Gujarati, Shaikh 'Alīm-ud-din Māndwi, Shaikh Mo'ammar Ibrāhīm b. Dā'ūd Mānipuri (d. Akbarabad), Shaikh Muhammad b. Tāhir 'Ali Patani author of the *Majm'a Bahār-al-Anwār*, Saiyid 'Abd-ul-Awwal Husaini b. 'Ali b. Al-'Ula al-Husaini and few other scholars."[10]

Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi

Syed Hakim 'Abdul Hai continues at another place in the *As-Thaqāfat al-Islamiyah fi al-Hind.*

"Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi b. Saif-ud-din Bukhāri (d. 1052/1642) was destined by God to diffuse the knowledge of *hadīth* in India. He started his pedagogical activities at Delhi, the metropolies of India, and spared no effort in promoting the study of *hadīth*. A large number of scholars graduated under him and some even penned treatises on the subject. Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi had to strive laboriously in diffusing the knowledge of *hadīth*; Allah caused a great benefit to be derived by the people through his toil and talents. His efforts were so outstanding in comparison to earlier scholars that he came to be regarded as the pioneer in this field in India. However, as already stated earlier, this is not attested by historical evidence.

"After the death of Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi, his son Shaikh Nūr-ul-Haq (d. 1073/1663) took up the unfinished task of his father. This tradition was continued by a few of his successors, as Shaikh-ul-Islam Shāreh Bukhāri, and Salām Ullah b. Shaikh Nūr-ul-Haq who wrote *Muhalla* and *Kamālain*."[11]

Prof. Khalīq Ahmad Nizāmi has correctly observed in the biography of Shaikh 'Abdul Haq :

"Anyhow, by the time Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith

Dehlavi started instructing students in *hadith* this branch of learning had almost become extinct in Northern India. He lighted the torch of Islamic learning in darkened surroundings so resplendently that people from far off places felt attracted to him like fire-flies. A new teaching centre of *hadith* came into existence in the northern part of the country, which culminated in transferring the centre of Islamic learning, particularly *hadith*, from Gujarat to Delhi."[12]

Need of a Mujaddid

Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi's sincerity of purpose and godliness diverted attention of the people towards study of *hadith* and created a new atmosphere of teaching and learning and research and writing on the subject which lent the hope that his successors and family members, some of whom were erudite scholars and writers, would give further encouragement to diffusion of the *hadith*. It was expected that *hadith* would be accorded its rightful place in the curricula of educational institution in the country. Mufti Nūr-ul-Haq (d. 1073/1663), the son of Shaikh 'Abdul Haq, was a reputed penman who had written a six-volume commentary on *Sahih Bukhāri* as well as on *Shamāil Tirmidhi* in Persian. He could have very well brought to completion the great task of his father, but, perhaps his engagement as Qazi of the Capital at Akbarabad (Agra) did not allow him to devote adequate time and attention to the tuitional and literary side of the propagation of *hadith*. His son Shaikh-ul-Islam Dehlavi was also a well-known scholar of *hadith* who wrote a detailed commentary on *Sahih Bukhāri*. But whatever may have been the reasons the efforts of the successors of Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi's could not spark off the popular interest in *hadith*, as was expected of them. One of the reasons, perhaps, was their inclination to utilize *hadith* for justification and furtherance of the Hanafite school of jurisprudence. There was another reason also. By the middle of the twelfth century

Delhi was losing its place as the pedagogic centre of the country to Lucknow where Mulla Nizām-ud-din Sihālwi (d. 1161/1748) was giving final shape to a new curriculum. Unfortunately, however, those who were shaping the new educational system had little intellectual contact with Makkah and Medina or those places which were known for the study, teaching and preaching of *hadīth*. They were chiefly influenced, as the evolution of *Dars-i-Nizāmi* and the literary and biographical works of its precursors show, by the intellectual sciences. Among the Islamic branches of learning their chief interest lay in jurisprudence.

Thus, India was, at that time, in search of a scholar who was enraptured with the charms of *hadith* to an extent that he was willing to devote himself whole-heartedly to its propagation. India got the man it needed in the person of Shāh Waliullah in the middle of the 12th century of Hijrah (18th century A. D.), who made a motto of his life what a poet has thus expressed :

Whatever I learnt, I have sunk in oblivion,
Save the talk of friend, that is my refrain.

Author of the *As-Thaqāfat-al-Islāmiyah fi-al-Hind* has after giving an account of the services of Traditionists of the eleventh and opening decades of the twelfth century A. H. entered into the endeavours of Shāh Waliullah who not only revived its study in India but created a general awakening among the Muslims. *Hadīth* came to be recognised as an essential part of curriculum of the religious schools which led the students to go in for specialisation and higher studies on the subject. *Sihāh Sittah*, particularly the four of it, that is, *Bukhāri, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd* and *Tirmidhi* began to be studied in depth (which is still not common in the Arab countries) and numerous commentaries on the classical works of *hadīth* came to be written in this country.[13] Standard works of *hadīth* were rendered into Urdu which proved of great benefit to the Muslim community including women. These works also created a desire among the people to follow the precepts of the holy Prophet. India, in fact, became such a centre of *hadīth* studies that the noted Egyptian scholar and editor of *Al-Manār* Syed Rashīd Raza has paid tribute to the Indian

scholars in these words :

"Had our brother scholars in India not paid attention to the science of *hadīth* in those days, its study would have suffered a complete extinction in the eastern countries. The subject was already being neglected in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Hijaz since the beginning of the tenth century resulting in its complete decline by the beginning of the fourteenth century."[14]

Shāh Waliullah's estimate about Hadith

What were the impulses and inspirations that spurred the Shāh to study *hadīth* and devote his entire life to its teaching and preaching? We shall have to turn to the Shāh's own writtings to find an answer to this question. His *magnum opus*, the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* opens with the words:

"The crown of all infallible knowledge and the source and foundation of religious branches of learning is the science of *hadīth* which gives us an account of the sayings and doings of the noble Prophet as well as tells us of his tacit approval of the things done in his presence. The *ahādīth* are like luminous torches in the surrounding darkness, the mile-stones of guidance or like the brilliant moon shedding light in a gloomy night. One who follows them finds guidance and is blessed with merit and those who disregard them are misguided and ruined For the life of the holy Prophet (on whom be peace) is the infinite source of divine commandments and prohibitions, admonitions and glad tidings and instructions and God's remebrance, the *ahādīth* abound in all these matters like the Qur'ān or even to a greater extent."[15]

At another place he writes:

"The first and foremost thing to which intellect guides any one is that the actions and aphorisms of the Prophet (on whom be peace) should be followed; then comes the stage wherein one should develop a

sincere inclination for them in his heart, for this is incumbent on a man who has put his trust in God and promised to abide by His commandments, and who has also resolved to discharge the responsibilities laid on him."[16]

Neglect of Hadīth Studies in India

Another motivation for Shāh Waliullah to revive the study of *hadīth* was the deviation of Indian Muslims from the true faith and practice. As already stated in the second chapter of this work even the educated people were not averse to innovations in religious matters or following superstitious and un-Islamic rites and customs. All these had gone to make Islam indistinct from polytheistic creeds. In the intellectual and pedagogic circles the Greek sciences were hailed as knowledge and wisdom. artificial and florid style was esteemed and theological dialectics attaching little importance to *hadīth* had overshadowed other religious branches of learning. Even those who were inclined to attain proficiency in religious sciences never went beyond the law and jurisprudence. These were the conditions which made the Shāh bewail in one of his writings:

"I ask you who regard yourselves as scholars! O' servants of God, you have entangled yourselves in the net of Greek sciences, grammar and syntax and etymology, and deem these to be the end of knowledge. But knowledge is to be found either in the explicit verses of the Book of God or the proven practice of the Prophet (on whom be peace). You ought to have known how the Prophet (on whom be peace) used to offer prayers, how he performed ablution, how he went to ease himself, how he kept fasts, how he performed the pilgrimage, how he went out to battle-field, how he conversed with others, how he kept everything in memory and how excellent was his character and behaviour. You had to follow his practice--not because it was obligatory on you—but

that it was the *sunnah*, the practice of the Prophet (on whom be peace). You ought to have learnt the injunctions prescribed by religion and created a longing in you for success in the life to come through your study of the biographies of the Prophet's companions and their successors. All these would have made you perfect in spirit. But your engagements and studies are all related to things that may be helpful in this life but not in the life to come.

"You leaf through the rulings of the earlier jurists and the commentaries compiled on them but are oblivious of the fact that the word of command is the behest of God and His Messenger. Many amongst you are told about a certain *hadīth*, but instead of accepting and acting on it, you take the plea that you are bound to follow your own school of jurisprudence rather than that what the blessed Prophet (on whom be peace) did or said. You seem to think that the responsibility of understanding and interpreting the *ahādīth* rested only on those who were experts and perfect in knowledge, and since they did not act on a certain *hadīth*, there must have been some reason for it—it must have been abrogated or superseded by another *hadīth*.

"Lo! this is not religion. If you have given faith to your Prophet, than follow him implicitly, irrespective of what your jurists say about it. God wanted you to follow the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*. If it is possible for you to do so, well and good; but if you lack the understanding to decide it for yourself, find out the rulings of earlier scholars and follow only those who were most pious and steadfast in following the *sunnah*. Do acquire the knowledge of those sciences which help to develop you intellectually, but always keep it in mind that they are merely the means and appliances and not an end in themselves. Has it not been made

> obligatory on you to disseminate knowledge until the usages and practices of Islam become evident and dominant in a country inhabited by Muslims? But you did not tell the people about Islamic practices and caused the people to be engaged in unreceived rites and customs."[17]

How much was Shāh Waliullah fascinated by the *hadith* and what a reverential regard he had for the earliest compilers of *hadīth* can be seen from a letter he wrote to one of his colleagues describing the merits and services of Imām Bukhāri.[18]

Enthusiasm for Hadith

It has already been mentioned earlier that when the Shāh took leave from his mentor Shaikh Abū Tāhir Madani, the latter recited a couplet which said :

> I have forgotten the pathways all,
> Save that leading to your lodge,

The Shāh promptly replied: 'I have unlearnt everything I had read, barring that pertaining to *hadīth*.'

Shāh Waliullah's life bears out that he remained true to what he had said to his mentor; he engaged himself for the rest of his life in the teaching, exposition and propagation of the *hadīth*

No sooner than the Shāh returned to India that he devoted himself wholeheartedly to the promotion of the study of *hadīth* in the country. It did not take long for the seminary known as Madrasa Rahīmiyah to become the foremost institution for *hadīth* studies attracting students from every nook and corner of the country. It had students from such far off places as Sind[19] and Kashmir,[20] besides those from nearer districts. Apart from Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz who took the place of his father and continued his mission, the Madrasa had the honour of producing several eminent scholars of international fame. Syed Murtaza Bilgarāmi, popularly known as Zabīdi (1145-1205/1732-1791), wrote the *Tāj-al-Uroos Sharh Qāmoos* and *Ithāf-us-S'ādatil Muttaqīn li Sharh Ihyā 'Uloom id Dīn* which carved out a place for him among the scholars of Arab countries. He used to have polemical

disputations with the scholars attached to court of Egyptian Sultans. Qāzi Thanāullah Pāni Pati (d. 1225/1713), a spiritual disciple of Mirza Mazhar Jān-i-Jānān[21] who wrote the *Tafsīr-i-Mazhari* and *Mālā Budd* had also been a student of the Shāh.

India thus became, perhaps for the first time in its history, due to the efforts of Shāh Waliullah, a centre of *hadīth* studies comparable to Yemen and some of its scholars were hailed as teachers of *hadīth* even in Hijaz.[22] Nawab Syed Siddīq Hasan Khān has alluded to the illustrious services of Shāh Waliullah to the cause of *hadīth* in his two Arabic couplets in these words:

> Whoever comes to your door, all his limbs get engaged in rehearsing the *hadīth*,
> Eyes speak of its coolness hands rejoice of its wealth, heart speaks of the contentment and peace and the ears announce the virtuous talk they hear.

In the above couplet the different Arabic words used for the limbs allude to the earlier scholars of *hadīth* such as Qurrata bin Khālid al-Sadusi, Sillata bin-Ashīm al-'Adwi, Jābir bin 'Abdullah and Imām Hasan Basri.

Writings of Shāh Waliullah

The Shāh wrote a number of works on *hadīth* and its allied subjects. A brief description of these is given here.

1. *Musaffa*—A commentary on *Muwatta* of Imām Mālik in Persian.

2. *Musawwa*—A commentary on *Muwatta* in Arabic.

Both these works were written by the Shāh to illustrate the way of teaching *hadīth* and drawing legal rulings from them. They also show the depth of his knowledge and insight into *fiqh* and *hadīth*. The Shāh gave precedence to the *Muwatta* of Imām Mālik in the six most authentic works of *hadīth* and assigned it the same place as given to *Ibn Mājah* by others. He always pleaded to give it precedence in teaching of the subject. He writes in his Will.

> "When one has attained proficiency in Arabic, he should be taught *Muwatta* with the chain of narrators through

Yahya b. Yahya Masmūdi. No deviation should be made in this regard, since it forms the central work in *hadīth* literature. Its study is of great merit. I have studied it thoroughly."[23]

3. *Sharh Tarājim Abwāb Sahīh Bukhāri.* The commentaries on *Bukhāri* have always been deemed essential for higher studies in *hadīth* with the result that every generation of scholars has attempted a new commentary adding new dimensions to its significance. The Shāh wrote this work in Arabic. It was first printed by the Dā'iratul Ma'ārif, Hyderabad in 1323/1905. Thereafter Ashah-ul-Matāb'e of Delhi included the work as introduction to the *Sahīh Bukhāri* published by it.

4. *Majmu'a Rasā'il Arba'a* is a collection of four short tracts and includes *Irshād ila Muhimmātil Asnād* and a *Tarājim-al-Bukhāri* (a short article of one page different from the *Sharh Tarājim*).

5. *Al-Fadhl al-Mubīn fil Musalsal min Hadīth in-Nabi al-Amīn-al-Nawādir min Hadīth Saiyid-ul-Awā'il wal-Awākhir.* This brochure sets forth the merit of compiling forty *ahādith*. Earlier scholars have penned treatises on the subject in their times but the Shāh has collected smaller yet significant *ahādīth*. It needs to be committed to memory and taught to the students

6. *Musalsalāt.* The Shāh has also written several treatises not properly on the subject of *hadīth* but indirectly connected with it which need to be gone through as preparatory works for *hadīth* studies. These works evince his depth of knowledge and insight into the science of *hadīth* and the manner in which *fiqh* and *hadith* can be harmonised. They also show his breadth of vision in a dispassionate evaluation of different works on the subject including their authors. Actually speaking they speak of the moderation and poise of the Shāh with which he had been gifted by God. The books falling in this category are :

(1) *Al-Ansāf fi Bayān-i-Asbāb al-Ikhtalāf :* Two epilogues are included in the *Hujjat Allah-al-Bāligha* which cover 22 pages and are divided into four sections. According to the publisher,[24] these concluding chapters were included in only one manuscript

of the *Hujjat*. In the concluding lines of these epilogues, the Shāh says :

> "I had decided to write a treatise under the title *Ghāyat al-Insāf fi Bayān-i-Asbāb al-Ikhtalāf* in which I wanted to discuss in some detail the reasons for differences illustrating them with examples and evidences but I could not find time for it. However, while dealing with the issue in this work (*Hujjat-Allāh al-Bāligha*) I thought it proper to pen whatever I had in mind at the time, since it was then easier to do so."[25]

It seems that the Shāh was able to find time to re-write this portion, with certain additions. The treatise subsequently completed makes certain additions and omissions in the epilogue spoken of earlier.

The *Al-Insāf* is a unique work on the topic and has seen several reprints in India and other countries. It was also published in Egypt, first in 1327/1909 by Shirkata al-Matbū'āt al-'Ilmiyah and then by Maktabata al-Mansūrah. I have before me another copy brought out by Dar-un-Nafā'is, Beirut which covers 111 pages of average size. It has been checked and edited by the noted Tradtionist Shaikh 'Abdul Fattāh Abu Ghuddah of Egypt.

(2) *'Iqd al-Jīd fi Ahkām al-Ijtihād wal-Taqlīd.*

(3) *Al-Mubhāth al-Sāb'e* of *Hujjat-Allāh al-Bāligha.*

The portion of the *Hujjat* extending from the second chapter of the first part to the last portion of the second one gives a logical and convincing exposition of the secrets and wisdom of *hadīth* and the method of its practical application for deduction of juridical rulings in a way typical with the Shāh – unequalled by any scholar either before or after him. It is regrettable that certain people studying or even teaching the *Hujjat* sometime skip over this part as if it were of less consequence.

Consistency between Fiqh and Hadith

The intellectual and educational circles in the Islamic world had been divided, since a long time, into two schools of *fiqh* and *hadīth*, each shaping its development independently of the other.

Very often the cleavage once engendered never allowed them to close their differences. The juristic schools took note of the *hadīth* only when they deemed it necessary to seek justification for the view held by them on a legal question, or when they had to rebut the criticism levelled against them for holding an incorrect view, or else to demonstrate the seemliness of their own juristic ruling in comparison to another school of *fiqh* In the teaching of the *Sihāh*, the jurisconsults normally tried to explain away the *ahādīth* not in conformity with the views of their school or brought forth those which helped to verify the accuracy of their stand. If the classical work of any school of jurisprudence based its arguments pertaining to any legal issue on the *ahādīth*, its followers having aptitude and competence to undertake research in *hadīth* normally limited their studies to the examination and elucidation of the *ahādīth* referred to in such a classical work.[26] These were undoubtedly praiseworthy intellectual endeavours to further the cause of their own schools of *fiqh*, still they could neither be deemed as efforts to re-evaluate the legal issues nor an essay at bringing out the compatibility of the *fiqh* and *hadīth*.

The different schools of jurisprudence had been converted into iron moulds which could be broken but neither bent nor expanded.[27] Those who adhered to any particular school of jurisprudence considered their own school to be hundred per cent faultless save for some remote possibility of human error. The prevailing thought has been succinctly expressed in an adage which says: "Our way is primarily exact and flawless with a remote possibility of error, but those of others are basically wrong and unreceived with some prospects of validity." The result of this way of thinking was that the four juristic schools (Hanafite, Mālakite, Shāfe'ite and Hanbalite) which had been acknowledged since the earliest times as sects within the main body of orthodox Islam, and whose founders were undisputedly revered as pious and saintly souls, were drifting apart with the passage of time and their differences were degenerating into public debates which often turned into brawls and violent clashes. Even worse was the lot of those scholars who left any juristic

school to follow the *hadīth* in devotions according to their own understanding. Shaikh Muhammad Fākhir Zā'ir (1120-1164/1611-1654) of Allahabad had to face popular resentment since, as some scholars assert, he dared follow the non-conformist path of the *Ahl-i-Hadīth*.

A significant achievement of the Shāh which constituted a part of his endeavour for the regeneration of Islam as well as propagation of the *hadīth* and restoration of the Prophet's *sunnah* was to establish the rapport between the *hadīth* and *fiqh* in order to combine and reconcile the four juristic schools. His efforts in this direction were in fulfilment of the inspiration claimed to have been received by him from the holy Prophet that God would bless his efforts for the consolidation of the Muslims in a particular way.[28]

In so far as Indian sub-continent is concerned, no effort seems to have ever been made earlier in this direction. The absence of any such attempt is explained by the peculiar historical and literary developments in this country. India had remained, ever since the advent of Islam in this country, under the Turk or Afghan suzerains. Both these races had not only been Hanafites from the time of their conversion to Islam but also its zealous supporters.

The Mālikites and Hanbalites were unable to gain an entry into India for about eight hundred years. Shāfe'ite school had some adherents in the southern coastal regions, but it remained limited to certain parts of Madras, Karnataka, Bhatkal and Kerala. Only Malabar had a preponderance of Shafe'ite school since a number of scholars, mystics and merchants belonging to that school had settled there after emigration from other countries. It could also not produce scholars and traditionists, save a few[29] like Shaikh Makhdūm Faqīh 'Ali Mahāyami (d 835/1432), the author of the *Tafsīr Tabsīr-al-Rahmān* and *Taisīr-al-Mannān*, Shaikh Makhdūm Ismā'il Faqīh al-Sakkari al-Siddiqi (d. 949/1542) and Makhdūm Shaikh Zain-ud-din (d. 928/1522), who could have exerted an influence on the intellectual circles of the northern India, or obliged the Hanafite scholars to study the

Shāfe'ite system of jurisprudence. Even those scholars of India who happened to undertake a journey to Hijaz for the study of *hadith*, preferred to receive education from the Hanafite scholars, mostly those who had migrated there from India or Afghanistan.[36] Hijaz was then included in the Turkish dominion whose dominant juristic school was Hanafite since the Turks also belonged to that school.

Shāh Waliullah was the first scholar from India whose chief tutor was the great Shafe'ite scholar Shaikh Abu Tāhir Kurdi Madani. Shaikh Abu Tāhir left a lasting impression on the Shāh because of his depth of knowledge, personal charm, spiritual perfection and breadth of vision. The Shāh has spoken of his tutors in Hijaz in the *Insān al-'Ayn*. They include Shaikh Tāj-ud-din Qalā'i who was a Hanafite scholar of *hadīth* but his another mentor Shaikh Muhammad Wafd Ullah b. Shaikh Muhammad b. Muhammad b Sulaimān was a Mālakite. During the time the Shāh remained in Hijaz the leading scholars and teachers, particularly those of *hadīth* originally belonged to Yemen or Kurdistan who were mostly Shāfe'ites. All these factors contributed to acquaint the Shāh with jurisprudence and distinctive features of the Shafe'ite school. Similarly, he got an opportunity to make himself informed of the Mālikite and Hanbalite systems which had not been available to any earlier Indian scholar owing to geographical, political, and cultural reasons. This made a comparative study of the different juristic schools easier for the Shāh in comparison to his predecessors.

The Shāh left for Hijaz in 1143/1730, when he was 30 years of age, after spending 12 years in the profession of teaching. He was, however, gifted with a bent of mind pre-disposed to an undogmatic attitude and reconcilation of differences, aptly expressed by the mystic Rūmi in one of his couplets :

You have come to bring communion,
And not to make separation.

He had already made up his mind to strive for bringing about a greater conformity between the *hadīth* and the *fiqh* and it was for this reason that he had started giving preference to the

juristic opinions of the *hadith* scholars over those of different schools of jurisprudence. He had written in *Al-Juz al-Latif fi-Tarjumata al-'Abd al-Dhāyif*:

"An study of the four juristic schools and their principles of jurisprudence as well as the *ahādith* on which they base their arguments has led me to prefer the juristic findings of the *hadith* scholars. This inclination was backed by divine influence. Thereafter, I was seized with a longing to make the pilgrimage to the two sacred Mosques."[31]

The Shāh disliked the approach of narrow-minded followers of the different juristic schools (who never allowed even the least deviation from their stand) as well as the Zāhiriyah sect (which rejected the *fiqh* and denounced the founders of juristic schools despite their depth of learning and piety). He criticized both these groups decrying them as extremists and guilty of immoderation. He held that the 'truth was in-between'; neither the former were absolutely correct nor the latter.

In the *Hujjat Allah al-Bāligha* he writes:

"The basis for juristic deduction, on the one hand, and following the *hadith* literally, on the other, are both grounded in true religion and scholars have at all times acted in accordance with both these principles. It is only that some have attached a bit more importance to the deductive approach than to the literal adherence of the *hadith* while others have taken a contrary course. It is not at all proper to ignore either of these principles to which commonality of both the groups is accustomed. The right course in this matter lies in bringing about a reconciliation between the two so that what is wanting in one is made up by the other. This was the view held by Imām Hasan Basri."[32]

The Shāh also writes in his *Wasīyat Nāmah*:

"Scholars who are well-versed both in the *fiqh* and *hadith* should be followed in petty matters, but the major

juristic issues should be constantly checked with the Book of God and *hadīth* of the Prophet (peace be upon him)."

Again he says:

"It is necessary for the Muslims to keep on correlating the rulings based on analogical deduction with the Qur'ān and the *hadith* for they can never afford to be unmindful of it."[33]

The Shāh had been mentally and educationally groomed in an atmosphere pervaded by the Hanafite school of jurisprudence and therefore he was conversant as well as appreciated the distinctive features of that school like any other scholar belonging to it. He acknowledged its merits and wrote on different occasions that owing to various historical, intellectual, political and cultural developments the Hanafite (as well as Shafe'ite) *fiqh* had come to receive greater attention, it was more polished and had a unified sequence, more commentaries on it were written and better exposition of its principles was made then could be claimed for any other juristic system. He wrote about Imām Abu Hanīfa:

"Imām Abu Hanīfa occupied a very high place in the *ijtihād* (interpretation) and *istanbāt* (application) of law adopted by the school of jurists like Ibrāhim Nakha'i and other equally eminent scholars. In his interpretations he has shown a deep insight in bringing out the rationale and reasons for his legal opinions. He took keen interest in working out the details of specific juristic issues."[34]

At the same time, the Shāh held Imām Mālik in the highest regard and considered his *Muwatta* as one of the most authentic collections of *hadīth*, which was in his view an indispensable work on the subject.[35]

On the other hand he paid tribute to the thoroughness and clarity of the Shafe'ite school, held it as nearest to *hadīth* and acknowledged the perspicacity of Imām Shafe'i.[36]

In regard to Ahmad ibn Hanbal, the Shāh writes in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*:

"Among these jurists and traditionists, the one most eminent, outstanding in his knowledge of *hadīth* and having a deep insight in juristic matters was Imām Ahmad ibn Hanbal while Is'hāq b. Rāhūyah occupied the place next to him "[37]

The Shah had cultivated a moderate and balanced view by going through the works and biographies of the founders of all the four juristic schools which had made him realise their deep knowledge and vision in religion as well as the great services they had rendered to the Muslims. This could not be expected from the scholars who had remained attached to a particular school and were unable, for various reasons, to step beyond the limits of their own juristic school.

The Moderate View

A distinguishing feature of Shāh Waliullah's revivalist endeavour which was the result of his instinctive perception, was the moderate and balanced approach he had adopted in regard to *ijtihād* (individual reasoning) and *taqlīd* (the unquestioning acceptance of the rulings of earlier jurists of one's own school). The Shāh's approach in this matter showed his strong commonsense, realism and discernment. On the one hand, there were scholars who deemed it incumbent on all Muslims, whether a scholar or a commoner, to follow the Qur'ān and Sunnah and to derive legal rulings directly from these sources. They considered *taqlīd* to be forbidden. This way of thought, though not explicitly spelt out by them, is the logical conclusion of the views expressed in the writings of the scholars of this school, headed by 'Allama Ibn Hazm among the earlier academicians. But this was impracticable since it was beyond the competence of every Muslim to exercise individual reasoning in legal matters.

On the other hand, there were those who considered *taqlīd* obligatory for every Muslim and held the opinion that the least deviation from it amounted to waywardness and errancy almost in the same way as the former group deprecated *taqlīd* of any particular school of jurisprudence. Those who favoured *taqlīd*

closed their eyes to the fact that the adoption of any particular juristic school was just a means to keep the common people away from following their own whims and personal predilections, to protect the Muslim society from confusion and anarchy, to bring about orderliness and uniformity in religious observances and, finally, to make it easier for the common people to abide by the injunctions of the *sharī'ah*. But they took the means for the end and insisted on it so dogmatically that the entire issue which pertained to legal methodology was ossified as if it were an article of faith, abiding and immutable.

The viewpoint of the Shāh in this regard was nearer to the spirit of *sharī'ah*. He drew inspiration from the practice followed in the earliest era of Islam which showed greater practical sense and feasibility since it met the demands of human life and psyche. In a chapter dealing with the practice followed by the people upto fourth century A.H. and thereafter in the investigation and scrutiny of religious issues he has given in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* a detailed account of the method of legal inquiry of those times. He writers :

Practice of Muslims During the Earliest Era

"It should be known that prior to the fourth century of Islamic era there was neither any consensus among the people on juristic issues nor they blindly followed any particular school of jurisprudence. Abu Tālib says in the *Qūt-al-Qulūb* that treatises on law (i.e. compilations of juristic opinions) came into existence later on. In the first two centuries it was not customary to repeat the findings of earlier jurists and the people neither adhered to any particular school of law in formulating their juristic opinion nor deemed the view held by any scholar on any issue as binding for those belonging to that school.

"I may add that after the first two centuries inferences began to be drawn from general to particular cases, but it is certain that during the fourth century the people

were not used to follow any particular school of law, nor they limited their enquiries and interpretations and citations of the legal rulings to any one school. This is clear from the usage of those times.

"The *ummah* (Muslim Society) consisted of two classes: one of the *'ulama* (scholars) and the other of common people.

"In the matters accepted by consensus, that is, those in which there were no differences between the common people and the majority of scholars, the people followed the practice of the law-giver (i.e., the holy Prophet). They learnt the method of performing ablution, bath, offering prayers paying the *zakāt* or similar devotional and obligatory duties from their parents or teachers and scholars of their towns, and acted on them. If any new issue cropped up, they used to enquire from any scholar learned in *fiqh* nearest to them, irrespective of the juristic school to which such a scholar belonged.

"In so far as the elites were concerned, they had sufficient knowledge of the *ahādīth* of the Prophet and practice of the companions to guide them and hardly needed anything else for their guidance. They were invariably aware of the *ahadīth* categorised as well-known or genuine, accepted by one or the other eminent jurist and for the rejection of which there was no valid reason. They also had the coinciding dictums of the companions and their successors which could not be disputed by any one. If, in regard to a particular issue, they found nothing to satisfy themselves, either because of the discrepant versions handed down through different sources or for want of a valid reason to prefer a particular report or any other reason, they turned to the writings of the jurists and scholars preceding them. If they found two dictums on the same issue, they accepted the one more sound and

judicious irrespective of the fact that it was the view held by an scholar of Medina or Kufa. Those who were endowed with the ability of arriving at their own judgement through interpretation or derivation did so to explore the issues on which no clear precedent was available. Such scholars were however known as belonging to the school of their teachers or fraternity. Some of these, for example, were known as Shafe'ites or Hanafites. Even the scholars who preferred to follow the *hadīth* (rather than any juristic school) were often taken as belonging to a certain school, if they were found in agreement with that school on a number of issues as, for example, Nassāi and Baihaqi were reckoned as Shafe'ites. Only such scholars were appointed, in those days, as judges or jurisconsults who possessed the ability of *ijtihād*. i.e., had attained a certain degree of competence in investigation and scrutiny of the principles of jurisprudence. They were known both as *faqīh* and *mujtahid*. Then there came afterwards the people who opted for any particular school of law."[38]

Legitimacy of Taqlīd

Taking a reasonable, detached and realistic view in the matter, the Shāh considered *taqlīd* justified for the man who followed a particular juristic school or one of the great jurists in order to give allegiance to the holy Prophet and his *shari'ah*, in case he found himself incompetent to discover religious injunctions or what was attested by the Book and the *sunnah*. There can be several reasons for *taqlid*, said Shāh Waliullah. One may be illiterate, or may not have the leisure to engage in study and enquiry, or may lack the resources to discover the directives, or else to draw any inference from them. In this connexion the Shāh has cited Ibn Hazm's view-point that *taqlīd* is forbidden since it is not permissible for any Muslim to accept the statement of anyone save the Prophet without adequate

reason. Thereafter he writes:

"What Ibn Hazm says will not hold good for a man who does not give allegiance to anyone save the Prophet (on whom be peace); for, he considers permissible and forbidden only what has been allowed and prohibited by Allah and His Apostle. But, as he has not directly received knowledge about the sayings and doings of the Prophet (on whom be peace), nor he has the ability to reconcile such reports and draw inferences from them, he merely relies on a pious and God-fearing scholar with the confidence that the scholar is only an exponent and commentator of the Prophet's *sunnah.* How can this man be blamed if he discards the scholar the moment he comes to know that his earlier estimate was not correct? How can such a man be deemed as opposed to the *sunnah* and the *shari'ah ?*

"Everybody knows that questions have been asked and juristic opinions given ever since the time of the Prophet (on whom be peace). It hardly matters whether a man always consults one jurisconsult or different jurists on different occasions. How can this be deemed as unlawful if the intention of this man is seemly and he sincerely desires to abide by the injunctions of the *shari'ah ?* Since we do not maintain that Allah has sent down His Law from the heavens to any jurisconsult or that the jurisconsult is immaculate and obedience to him is a must for us, adherence to such jurist and preceptor is merely because we consider him to be a scholar of the Qur'ān and *sunnah* of the Prophet (on whom be peace). Whatever advice is given by such an scholar will either be based on a clear directive of the Qur'ān and the *sunnah* or derived from these in accordance with the principles laid down for it. He may, however, be led to believe, in all sincerity, that a certain matter is based on a given stipulation found in the Book or the *sunnah*, although

his view may not be correct. In this case the jurist will be said to have unintentionally made a wrong analogical deduction, even though he may maintain that his opinion is based on what the Prophet (on whom be peace) has said about the stipulation necessary for taking that view. In the circumstances, his analogical deduction can be attributed to the directive of the Prophet (on whom be peace) as understood by him. Had this not been an accepted rule, nobody would have ever followed any jurist. But if we come to know of an authentic *hadīth* with reliable chain of narrators contradicting the legal opinion of that jurist or Imām, and we reject the *hadith* by giving preference to the analogical deduction of the jurist, then who would be a greater wrongdoer than us and what would be our excuse when we shall tomorrow be facing God."[39]

Characteristics of the Four Juristic Schools

With this sharp and judicious analysis of *taqlīd*, the Shāh also throws light on the wisdom of following the four juristic schools by a great majority of Muslims all over the world in a slim but valuable tract entitled *'Iqd al-Jīd fi Ahkām al-Ijtihād wal-Taqlīd* He says :

"Remember that there is a great security in following the four juristic schools while a great risk is involved in rejecting them. There are several reasons for it. First, the Muslims have always been agreed upon reposing confidence on the earliest generation of Muslims in the matter of ascertaining the rules of *sharī'ah*. The successors of the companions relied on their predecessors, those who came after them on the earlier generations and so on. The scholars in all ages have reposed trust in their forerunners. Reason also commends this course for the two sources of knowledge of *sharī'ah* are its transmission

and drawing inferences. Transmission is possible only when the later generation is willing to learn from its predecessor. For drawing an inference it is equally necessary that the views of the earlier generations should be known so that any conclusion drawn does not go beyond the sphere of its frame of reference and thus contravene the consensus of the Muslim community on any issue. Hence it is essential to rely and seek help of our forerunners. This is correct of all other branches of learning, arts and crafts, since these can be learnt only from and keeping company of their instructors. It seldom happens that one can acquire expertise without following this course; one can argue that this is possible, but actually it never happens.

"Now that it is established that to repose trust in the findings and dictums of our forbears is essential, it becomes necessary that the sayings on which we have to rely have been transmitted through reliable sources; they have been included in well-known compilations; have been duly examined and analysed in a way that those to be given precedence over others are clearly spelt out; those commonly accepted are sifted from others approved only by a few; the source of a directive is known; its exact implication is ascertainable; different sayings are capable of being reconciled and the rationale of injunctions is also explicit. Any juristic school and its juristic opinions lacking these conditions cannot be relied upon. There is not a single school of law formulated in the ages gone by, save these four schools, which fulfils all these conditions."[40]

The Shāh adopted the course of moderation between *ijtihād* and *taqlīd* which chimed with the objectives of the *sharī'ah*, human psychology and the realities of life. He approved of *taqlīd* on the conditions that intention was seemly and proper and

one was clear in his mind about emulating the Prophet (on whom be peace) and following the injunctions of the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*. He permitted dependence on an scholar solely on the ground of one's confidence in his being an exponent and interpreter of *sharī'ah* by virtue of his being learned in the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*. Such reliance was also to be accompanied by a willingness to discard a scholar in case the trust reposed in him proved to be misplaced. He held that a believer should not have the least hesitation in accepting a directive contained in a *hadīth* if the opinion of the jurist was found to differ from it.

> "But nay, by thy Sustainer! They do not (really) believe unless they make thee (O Prophet) a judge of all on which they disagree among themselves, and then find in their hearts no bar to an acceptance of thy decision and give themselves up (to it) in utter self-surrender."[41]

Necessity of Ijtihād

Shāh Waliullah considered *ijtihād* (interpretation or discovery of law from its sources within the frame-work and in accordance with the methodology laid down for such an exercise) essential for every age in order to meet the changing social needs of the time even though he acknowledged the distinguishing features of the four schools of Islamic law, paid tribute to the greatness as well as the services rendered by the earliest traditionist-jurists and recommended to make full use of their scholarly findings. He declared that to ignore these schools was fraught with danger and was also harmful for the community. At the same time, he also pleaded that *ijtihād* was but a natural outcome of the changes brought about by the march of time and hence necessary for not only the expansion of the Islamic law but also for the guidance of mankind in accordance with the divine revelation. In his view it was the duty of religious scholars to exert themselves for *ijtihād* in all times to come. In his introduction to *Musaffa*, he writes:

> "*Ijtihād* is a *fard bil kifāyah*[42] in every age. The *Ijtihād* I am speaking of here does not mean that it should be

of the same calibre as that of Imām Shāfe'i who was second to none in his knowledge of the canons for reception and rejection of *hadith*, Arabic grammar and syntax etc., and who never had to depend on any one in legal interpretation or drawing an inference. I mean here the affiliated *ijtihād* which signifies finding out the injunctions of the *sharī'ah* from the original sources and interpreting and drawing inferences on the lines indicated by the great jurists, irrespectives of the school followed for the purpose.

"And when we say that *ijtihād* is incumbent during the present times (and there is a consensus among scholars on this point), it is because new issues crop up rapidly and they cannot be encompassed beforehand. It is essential to know the command of God about such matters, for what has already been written or compiled on the subject may be insufficient or likely to give rise to controvercies. Such issues cannot be solved without re-examining the arguments given therefor. Certain rulings handed down from the great jurists are also intersected and cannot be fully relied upon. Therefore, these matters cannot be solved unless the issues are re-examined in accordance with the methodology laid down for legal reasoning and a fresh examination of the issues.[43]"

Notes and References :

1. The brochure contains the opening speech of the writer in a seminar held on 13th September, 1981, which was organised by the Rabita al-Ālam al-Islāmi on the '*Role of Hadīth in the Promotion of Islāmic Climate and Attitudes.*' The article was subsequently published in Arabic, English and Urdu.
2. Q. 33 : 21.
3. Q. 3 : 31.

4. *Hākim, Mustadrak.*
5. The six most authentic compilations of *hadīth.*
6. *Saviours of Islamic Spirit,* Lucknow, 1983, Vol. III, pp. 208-9.
7. *Role of Hadīth in the Promotion of Islamic Climate and Attitudes,* Lucknow, 1982, pp. 29-35.
8. *Ibid.,* p. 37.
9. *Ibid.,* p. 39.
10. Hakīm S. 'Abdul Hai, *Islāmi Uloom wa Funoon Hindustan Men,* (Urdu trans. Abul Irfān Nadwi), Azamgarh, 1970, pp. 195-96.
11. *Ibid.,* pp. 197-198.
12. Khalīq Ahmad Nizāmi, *Hayat Shaikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith, Dehlavi,* p. 43.
13. For the large number of scholars of *hadīth* and the treatises and commentaries written on the subject one can refer to Hakīm Syed 'Abdul Hai's *As-Saqāfata-al-Islāmiyah fi al Hind* or its Urdu translation published under the name of *Islāmi Uloom wa Funūn Hindustān Men.*
14. Introduction to *Maftāh Kanūz-al-Sunnah.*
15. Introduction to *Hujjāt Allāh-al-Bāligha.*
16. *Kalemāt-i-Tayyabāt,* p. 172.
17. *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiya,* Vol. I, Dhabel, 1936, pp. 214-15.
18. *Kalemāt-i-Tayyabāt,* pp. 167-168.
19. Muhammad Moin, a scholar from Sind, came to Delhi to be instructed by the Shāh in *hadīth.* His work entitled *Darāsāt-al-Labīb fil Uswatil Hasanāta bil-Habīb* reflects the thought of Shāh Waliullah. He died in 1161/1748. (*Nuzhatul Khawātir,* Vol. VI).
20. Khwāja Muhammad Amīn Kāshmīri (d. 1187/1773) was one of the devoted students of the Shāh. He came to be known later on as Muhammad Amīn al-Waliallāhi, and taught Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz. He wrote several treatises. (*Nazhatul Khawātir, Vol. VI*).
21. *Nuzhatul Khawātir,* Vol. VII.
22. Two of those who studied in the Shāh's madrasa, Shāh Is'hāq Dehlavi and Shāh 'Abdul Ghani Mujaddidi taught *hadīth* to students in the two sacred mosques. (*Nuzhatul Khawātir,* Vol VII).
23. *Wasiyāt Nāmah,* p. 11.
24. Maktaba Salfia, Lahore.
25. *Hujjat-Allah al-Bāligha,* pp. 161.

26. An striking example of it is furnished by *Nasb al- Rāyata fi Takhrīj Ahādīth al-Hidāyah of Zaila'i.*

27. There have always been people who have discarded one juristic school for another, for example, abandoned Hanafite school for the Shafe'ite or vice versa, or forsaken all the juristic schools to follow the path of *Ahl-i-Hadīth*, but one has seldom claimed to adhere to a juristic school but ventured to follow the juristic opinion of another school on a particular issue. No exception in following a juristic school was deemed permissible since it was thought that disagreement on any issue from one's juristic school amounted to total rejection of the authority of the founder of that school.

28. *Fayūz-ul-Haramayn* p. 62.

29. A detailed description of such scholars can be seen in the *'Arab wa Dayār-l-Hind* by Khawājā Bahā-ud-dīn Akrami Nadwi of Bhatkal.

30. As, for example, Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi of Burhānpūr, the author of *Kanz-al-Ummāl*, Qutb-ud-din Nahrwāli, Mulla 'Ali Qāri Harawi Makki, Shaikh 'Abdul Wahhāb Makki, Shaikh Muhammad Hayāt Sindhi etc.

31. *Al-Juz al-Latīf fi-Tarjumata al-'Abd al-Dhayīf*, included in the *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn*, Matb'a Mujtabā'i, pp. 203-204.

32. *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha, op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 156.

33. *Wasiyat Nāmā* (Persian), pp. 2-3

34. *Al-Insāf fi-Bayān-i-Asbāb al-Ikhtalāf*, Dār-un-Nafāis, Beirut p. 39.

35. See Introduction to *Musaffa.*

36. *Al-Khair al-Kathīr*, p. 124; *Qurata 'Ainayn*, p. 242.

37. *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, Vol. I, p. 150

38. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 152-153.

39. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 155-156.

40. *'Iqd al-Jīd*, pp. 36-38.

41. Q. 4 : 65.

42. A command which is imparitive upon all Muslims, but if a sufficient number perform it, the same will be supposed to be sufficient or equivalent to all having performed it.

43. Introduction to *Musaffa*, Matb'a Farūqi, Delhi, p. 12.

VII

Exposition of the Rationale of Shari'ah and Hadith.

(Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha)

The *magnum opus* of Shāh Waliullah, the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, is a comprehensive and cogent work presenting a synthesis of the Islamic creed, devotions, transactions, morals, social philosophy, statecraft and spirituality. All these have been balanced and integrated in such a perfect manner that they appear to be jewels of the same necklace or links of the same golden chain. It also does not suffer from the usual weaknesses found in most of the old works, written apologetically or aggressively. This moderation and balance is the result of the Shāh's deep and wide knowledge of *hadith* and his bent of mind fostered by the study of the Prophet's character as well as keeping company with pious and virtuous scholars. Few works can compare the compendious yet clear and cohesive exposition attempted in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*,[1] which laid the foundation of a new dialectical theology for the modern age of reason. It is thus a work which can satisfy any truehearted man endowed with common sense, provided, of course, he can appreciate and ponder over the profound investigations of the Shāh. So far as we are aware there is no other work in any language known to us, written for the investigation of the truth of any religion

on a rational basis or if it has been written, it has not come to light.

India or rather the entire world of Islam was ripe, by the close of twelfth century A.H., owing to several social, intellectual and pedagogic developments, to enter into a new age of reason which was to stimulate a general taste for discovering the rationale of the precepts and directives of *shari'ah*. This new trend would have surely misled many a mind and pen; for, the *hadith* and *sunnah* were to be singled out, due to peculiar circumstances of the time, for criticism and creating doubts in their authenticity[2]. Nobody could have succeeded in meeting this challenge if he had not been well-versed in the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*, philosophy, theology, ethics, psychology, sociology and economics (of his time) and also possessed the purity of spirit known as *ihsān* in Islamic idiom.

All these factors demanded that before the new era began, some one should deal, within human limitations, of course. with the issues that were going to be raised shortly. Such a man need not have been impeccable nor his knowledge was to transcend his own time and space; he was bound to reflect the then current of knowledge and his pattern of education; yet, he had to be a faithful interpreter of the *hadith* and *sunnah*.

Writing about the reasons and impulses which led him to pen the *Hujjāt Allāh al-Bāligha*, the Shāh says:

> "The most delicate and deep as well as sublime and glorious aspect of the science of *hadith* consists of its wisdom and rationale and characteristics and significance of religious injunctions which impart insight into them and save man from confusion and eccentricity."[3]

A Delicate Topic

Any description of religious truths, involving the wisdom and rationale behind a given injunction of the *shari'ah* is, however, an extremely delicate task since even a passing emphasis, a penchant for any particular way of thought or prevailing concepts of the time can mislead the writer to dwell more on the material

benefits and advantages to be had from such a precept than to emphasise the real purpose of the religious practices which ultimately aim at creating a living consciousness of God, following His commands and achieving eternal salvation.

A treatment of the subject can divert one's attention to seek for an evolved structure of the society for cultural or political purposes completely neglecting the spirit of *imān* (faith) and *ihtisāb*[4] (conviction) and thus injure them irreparably. Take for instance the objectives of *salāt* or ritual prayer which can be described as a military exercise, helpful in instilling a sense of discipline and following the leader; *saum* (fasting) can be explained as beneficial for health; *zakat* (poor-due) as a tax on the rich for the benefit of the poor; and *haj* (pilgrimage) can be made out as the occasion for an international annual conference for considering the issues facing the Muslim world.

These were the dangers, not imaginary since several such examples can be cited, which had made the task so delicate that only a scholar with a deep knowledge of all branches of religious sciences, versed with the object of divine revelation and prophethood and having a settled belief peneterating into his heart and soul could acquit himself of this delicate task. None was more qualified to undertake this great venture than Shāh Waliullah.

Earlier Writings

Thus Shāh has made a mention of the endeavours made by earlier scholars but these were in his view, meagre and inconsiderable. He writes in the introduction to *Hujjat Allah al-Bāligha*.

> "The scholars of old had tried to expound the rationale which have been given due consideration in legal matters. Those who delved into them later on have hinted at some very profound reasons, but these are also scanty. To delineate these issues now will not mean going against the consensus as nobody has left any fullfledged work on this subject nor laid down the norms and corollaries in a systematic manner."[5]

The Shāh has referred to the writings of Imām Ghazzāli

'Allāma Khattābi and Shaikh-ul-Islām 'Iz-ud-din b. 'Abdus Salām which allude, at places, to the wisdom of the *shari'ah.*[6] He has refuted the view that the prescriptive directions of the *shari'ah* need not have any design and goal or that there was no relationship between the actions and their retribution. He has based his arguments on the Quranic verses and *ahādith* in which such a relationship has been spelt out or the merit or demerit of any deed has been explained He cites *ahādith*, on the authority of Caliph 'Umar and other companions, expounding the reasons for the excellence of certain deeds and observances or the disadvantages inherent in some of the forbidden acts.[7] He has controverted the assumption that the task was so precarious that it need not be attempted or that it fell in the category of 'modernism' or that it was fruitless and impracticable. He has also recounted the reasons why the matter could not be attended to by earlier scholars.[8]

The Shāh has stressed the desirability of expounding this branch of Islamic learning. He says that there may be *ahādith* which apparently contradict reason and some of the jurists have even discarded them on that ground. In such cases it becomes necessary, according to the Shāh, to re-examine them to find out whether such *ahādith* are really sensible and plausible.[9] Another reason given by him is the differences between various juristic schools. Some close their eyes to intelligibility of a *hadith*, some take recourse to its interpretation and explanation while others just accept its outward meaning. The differing standards applied by various groups, which were distemperate in his view, called for a fuller elucidation of the subject. He considered such an attempt not only permissible and useful but also the need of the hour and a great service to the cause of religion.[10]

Apart from the Shāh's realisation of the urgency of this task and his own experience, he had an inspiration from the holy Prophet which convinced him that a new interpretation of religion was required of him. He says, "I found an illumination within my heart which went on increasing. During my stay in Makkah I saw Imām Hasan and Imām Husain in a dream who gave me

a pen saying that it belonged to their maternal grandfather, the Messenger of Allah on whom be peace and blessings."[11]

Shaikh Muhammad Āshiq of Phulat, a cousin as well as a disciple who was a constant companion of the Shāh, was very insistent that he should undertake the task. He was fully aware of the capabilities of the Shāh besides being very intimate to him.[12]

Thus it was that God caused this momentous work to be written by the Shāh.[13]

Introductory Topics

The opening topics touched upon by the Shāh comprise discussions which demonstrate the essentiality of divine guidance, revelation, prophethood and the instruction and coaching man receives from them. The discussion centres round the basic concept of responsibility[14] in which he shows clearly that it springs from human nature. The capabilities man enjoys demand that God should charge him with responsibilities akin to angelic obligations and then reward him for them. It also demands that beastly inclinations, inherent in man's nature, should be interdicted and should also be punished for indulging in them.[15] The discussion by the Shāh shows his extensive comprehension of the nature of the animal kingdom, plant life and human beings as well as such disciplines as physics medicine etc. He has established, on rational grounds, that the excellence man enjoys over the beasts and plants and the faculties and inherent dispositions he possesses naturally call for moral responsibility as well as divine guidance for the same. The meaningful expressions he uses in this connexion are *al-takaffuf-al-hāli* (beseeching involuntarily) and *al-takaffuf-al-'ilmi* (soliciting intellectually).

The Shāh argues that apart from faculties of reason and speech possessed by man, he has also an urge to advance and augment the capacities of his intellect and enterprise; he has an ambition of attaining perfection and, at the same time, this impulse is insatiable. These instincts, common to all human beings, connote the Grace of God, a manifestation of His

sustenance *(rabūbiyat)*[16] and mercy, which constitute the ultimate cause of the creation of angels, cosmic turmoils and raising of the messengers by God. The Shāh holds the view that worshipful devotions and inclination to moral imperatives are as much instinctive to human beings as flesh for carinvorous animals, grazing for other quadrupeds and obedience to the bee-queen by the honey-bees with the sole exception that in the case of animals these are innate propensities while man acquires these through knowledge, exertion, inspiration or revelation and imitation.[17]

The Shāh regards, requital i.e., reward and punishment to be the natural consequence of man's moral liability. He enumerates four reasons for it: one, the requirement of his characteristic features; two, the influences of *malāi'alā*[18] (superior angelic sphere); three, the demands of *shari'ah*, and four, a consequence of prophethood and divine dispensation to bless man with success.[19] He further explains that the people differ in their actions, morals and level of attainment because of their natural dispositions. The convergence of angelic and beastly qualities, the proportion of their weakness and strength and their inter-relationship have been divided by the Shāh into eight categories. He gives the characteristics of all these different combinations and their dominant features The discussion on the subject besides being a distinctive feature of the work, also bears witness to the Shāh's intelligence and sound logical reasoning.[20] It also shows his deep insight into human psychology.

Importance and Effect of Deeds

Importance of human actions, their effects on personality of the doer and the world at large, as well as their aftermath on the world to come have been delineated by the Shāh. He says that a time comes when these actions produce the same influences (either because of the agreeableness or displeasure of the superior angelic sphere) as are found in the charms and amulets described by the doctors of old.[21]

These preliminary discussions help the reader to understand the subsequent discources which deal with the natural dispositions

of man, his moral liability and the reasons therefor, their influences, the consequences of divine sustenance and mercy, the significance of human actions, correlation between social order and human existence and, finally, the facts of mute reality and intangible categories of things and ideas.

Sociability

Anyone going through the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* will not fail to mark that the Shāh's percipience and realism as well the trend of fast changing events in his day had led him to conclude that the people will in the near future seek to know the rationale and significance of *shari'ah*, particularly of the teachings, and injunctions contained in the *hadith* and *sunnah* of the holy Prophet and the relationship between religion and human life. They would, he seems to have anticipated, endeavour to discover the correlation between human life and divine guidance in the wider context of social relationship and test the validity of these teachings according to their utility in that sphere.

The Shāh wrote the *Hujjat*, primarily to expound the purpose and reality of the *shari'ah* and to present a rational interpretation of the *hadith* and *sunnah* but before dealing with the matters defined as permissible and forbidden which are related, basically to rewards and punishments and salvation, he initiates the discussion with the physical phenomena and human life on whose understanding depends the formation of a healthy social order and a blooming culture. The Shāh has coined the word *irtifiqāt* which, so far as our knowledge goes, no Muslim theologian, philosopher or socialogist had used earlier, at least in the sense he has employed the term.

Significance of the term

'*Irtifāq*', in the Shah's terminology, signifies lawful dealings between individuals, cooperation and collaboration and the means adopted for mutual benefit or for an agreeable and moderate social existence.[22]

The Shāh has, in this way, reviewed individual and

collective welfare of the people pertaining to this world and the next. He holds the view that the cosmic order should not merely be in harmony with the legal and moral order preached by the prophets of God but should also help and reinforce its purpose. He was the first among scholars of ethics and economics to determine a close relationship between the norms of ethics, on the one hand, and economics and socialogy, on the other. He showed that when the rapport between the two is rent asunder, both economics and ethics undergo a crisis which has its impact on religion and morals as well as society and culture. Collective morals of a people are devastated, according to the Shāh, when external compulsion brings them to the point of impoverishment. For man, endowed with spiritual and angelic potentialities, is then forced to earn his daily bread like the beasts unmindful of all other higher and nobler aspirations.

Citizenship, its Essence and varieties

The Shāh gives a comprehensive and unique definition of citizenship, whose centre he calls *al-madina* or the city. In the chapter entitled *Bāb-i-Siyāsatil-Madina* of the *Hujjat* he says:

> "*Al-madina* (the city) implies inhabitants of a town who have a certain degree of contiguity and cooperate in certain matters, though living at different places."[23]

He goes on to define civic system in these words:

> "*Siyāsat-i-Mudun* (civic system), in my view, is the discipline expounding the means to preserve and protect affinity and inter-relationship already existing among the citizens."[24]

The social life of the citizens is then explained by him as follows:

> "The inter-relationship found within the citizens of a town makes it like an individual; it is composed of a number of ingredients but can be conceived as a composite personality."[25]

The Shah categorises sociability into two grades. One of it is elementary and essential, which is to be found even in the

undeveloped stage such as in those living in rural areas. The other is developed and corporate which is usually a mark of the inhabitants of a city. There are two more stages of it. The first of these is expressed by an orderly social order and administrative set-up which leads to the fourth stage of *Khilāfat-i-'Aammah*. The Shah lays great emphasis on the maintenance of affinity and inter-relationship between the outlying and far-flung areas and deems it as much essential as between the dwellers of any particular town even in the primary stage of crystallization of citizenship.[26]

Nature of Earnings

The Shāh's discussion on *irtifāqat* also throws light on the motives of earning a living. In this connection he does not forget to point out the unnatural and un-ethical means of earnings. He says:

> "There are people who, as a matter of course, find it difficult to earn their living through legitimate and honest means with the result that they take to the ways harmful for the public and societal life as, for example, theft, gambling begging or illegal and immoral transactions."[27]

The Shāh's writings on *irtifāqāt* make certain observations which allude to his perception of the factors responsible for rise and fall of civilizations. He writes in the *Hujjat* that:

> "When people develop an unusual daintyness and fastidiousness due to excessive affluence then those who cater to their needs take up jobs of a peculiar type, each monopolising a certain occupation."[28]

He also invites attention to economic activities harmful for the society. He says that if all the people were to prefer a certain occupation, say, if everybody takes up trade and abandons agriculture or gets enlisted in the armed forces, it will be detrimental for them. In his views agriculture is like food while commerce, industry and administration are like salt. He also pointed out the twin reasons for devastation of the country in his times. One of it, the Shāh says, constitutes the self-seeking hangers-on of

the public treasury who hardly do any work.[29] The other cause, as stated by him, was the heavy taxation on the cultivators, traders and craftsmen. He warns his compatriots: "The people in our times should realise these facts and take heed of them."[30]

Disproportionate diversion to recreation and entertainment is viewed by the Shāh as one of the factors responsible for crippling the society. He cites the then craze for chess, hunting and pigeon-breeding as a few examples of it.[31] In the same way he holds that turning a blind eye to such lewdness and crimes as no sane and upright person would brook if committed against his own person, are detrimental to the society and ultimately cause the downfall of the state.[32]

Blessedness

In another section of the *Hujjat* dealing with blessedness, the Shāh points out that attainment of an state of blissful grace and heavenly felicity is of crucial importance to man. It can be gained by purification of the self and subordinating one's beastly propensities to angelic disposition.[33]

Blessedness, the Shāh explains, has at its base, four precepts for which Apostles were sent by God. These propositions constitute the celestial law or the fundamental standards for all religions and the injunctions promulgated by them. They are the effective means for realising the ends of prophethood.

1. Purification (cleanliness which helps one to meditate and establish communion with God).
2. God-consciousness and contrition through penitence.
3. Tolerance, generosity and ethicalness.
4. Justice (impartiality which helps to establish sound administration).[34]

It is through these means, according to Shāh Waliullah, that man's personality can find its fulfilment through a living awareness of God and can create a healthy society which also carries through the objective for which Apostles were sent with God-given laws.

Shāh Waliullah, then goes on to describe the means to realise these four qualities,[35] as well as the hurdles that impede their

progress. These hinderances are three in number. First, instinctive and psychological inhibitions; secondly, external influences; and thirdly, upshots of faulty education and mistaken beliefs.[36] The Shāh then tells how to overcome these drawbacks.[37]

Creed and Devotions

The fifth section of the *Hujjat* discusses virtue and sin which is in fact, the main topic of the book.[38]

The first principle of virtue taken up by the Shāh is *tauhid* since it prepares one for remorse and repentance which open the way to divine grace. The Shāh has categorised *tauhid* into four grades and explained what really constituted the *shirk* (polytheism) of the pagan Arabs.[39] He explains the reality of *tauhid* (Oneness of God) and thereafter the significance of faith in the Divine Attributes, His Omnipotence and Decree, and the homage to be paid to the signs and marks of God (the chief among which are the Qur'ān, the Kaba, the Prophet and the prayer). Then the Shāh switches over to devotions and obligations and discusses the rationale of ablution, bathing, prayer, poor-due, fasting and pilgrimage.[40] The treatment of these subjects is brief and confined to the principles, but it contains expositions which can hardly be found anywhere else. To cite an instance, in his discussion about the philosophy of prayers, the Shāh points out that it consists of three parts, standing, genuflexion and prostration. Instead of any descent from a higher to a lower stage, it actually leads to an ascent of the spirit from the lower to the higher. The Shāh asserts that this is the natural course demanded by reason. The Shāh also explains why devotion to God, prescribed in the ritual prayer, does not lay emphasis only on meditation and reflection on God or His continuous remembrance (as has been the custom of neo-platonists, esoterics, Hindu *yogis* and certain misguided mystics). He says that meditation and contemplation would have been helpful or even possible only for those having an inclination for it. They could alone make spiritual progress through it. But the prayer being a composite of introspection and action, concentration and physical movement becomes effective

and fruitful for men with all types of mental attitudes. There is thus nothing more beneficial than the prayer in protecting against baneful influences and subordinating one's inclinations to reason.[41]

The Shāh has alluded to fasting and pilgrimage in this section of the *Hujjat* but discussed them in greater detail in its second part. The motivations and reasons therefor as given by the Shāh were never expounded earlier by any scholar. A reference to these will be made later on.

Community Affairs and the Prophet

The sixth section of the *Hujjat* reviews an extremely important issue under the title 'Discussion relating to Affairs of the Community'.[42] Examining the matter in all profoundness, which shows his discernment and penetrating insight, the Shāh explains why people needed the prophets of God for showing them the right path and why human intellect and reason were not enough to meet this paramount need of humanity. He goes further to expound the characteristics of the messengers of God and the conditions necessary for their success in achieving their objectives. The treatment of the subject by the Shāh is quite unconventional and different from that normally found in other theological works explaining the need of prophethood. Unlike the treatment of the subject by other scholars, the Shāh's discussion is rationally satisfying, His discourse on the status and characteristics of prophethood reveals his comprehension of not only the essence of *sharī'ah* and reality of prophethood but also his deep insight into human psychology and the motivating factors of ethical behaviour. Here we shall give a summary of the Shāh's analysis of the subject.

Comprehensive Prophethood

Shāh Waliullah maintains that comprehensive prophethood is the most perfect form of apostleship. Comprehensive prophethood, says the Shāh, is granted to that prophet who guides and prepares a nation or community to call the people to his teachings and ensures continuance of the prophetic mission. Apostleship

is vested in the person of the prophet while the community entrusted with the duty of propagating the mission of the prophet becomes indirectly responsible to discharge the obligation laid on it. The prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace) was, according to Shāh, a comprehensive apostleship which made his entire followers responsible for carrying out his prophetic mission. This obligation is explicity stated by the Quran:

> You are the best community that has ever been raised up for mankind. You enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency. And you believe in Allah.[43]

The holy Prophet even used the word *b'atha* meaning sent or commissioned while addressing his companions. He said:

> You have been sent (or raised up) to make things easy and not to create difficulties.[44]

The portion of this chapter throwing light on the marked traits and disposition of the prophets and their manner of discourse and propagation of the mission is the most outstanding. It shows how meticulously he had studied the lives of the prophets and pondered deeply over the Qur'ān.[45]

Morality in Byzantine and Iranian Cultures

The age of Ignorance was not peculiar to Arabia; it was a universal decadence of spiritual, moral, social and economic values, though spearheaded by the Iranians and the Byzantines. The cultures of these two nations were popular and followed by others, although their degeneration was most pronounced in their principal towns and the societal usages of these peoples.

The picture of Iranian and Byzantine societies depicted by the Shāh and the reasons given for their dissoluteness, beats the description given by earlier historians and socialogists. His narration is vivid as well as captivating in its mode of expression and style.

A short extract from the writing of the Shāh is given here which illustrates his penetrating insight into history and his facility to pin-point the causes leading to the decay of these

civilizations.

"Ruling over the world for several hundred years, without any let or hindrance, the Iranians and the Byzantines had completely overlooked the after-life and, thus, induced by the devil, they had become extremely fastidious and fussy in regard to leading an easy and pleasureable life. They vied with one another in luxury and polish and took pride in their refinement. Their leading cities had attracted expert artisans and craftsmen from all parts of the world whose constant endeavour was to refine and invent new artifices of decoration and comfort which became the prevailing taste in no time. This process continued giving satisfaction to the affluent class. The standard of living had become so high that it was considered below dignity for a grandee to wear a girdle and tiara worth less than a hundred thousand *dirhams*. Anyone without a magnificent palace, unadorned by fountains, baths and gardens, not in possession of healthy horses and good-looking slaves and unable to serve dainty and appetizing victuals to his guests or to wear the most costly dresses was looked down upon among his compatriots. It would be tedious to give these details here. One can very well imagine the conditions than obtaining from what we know of the princes[46] in our own country.

"This flourish and pageantry had become a part of their life and culture: they had embedded so deeply in their hearts that these could not be extricated in any way.........It was an incurable disease encompassing the whole society, from the nobility down to the poorest sections. It was a great calamity which had not left untouched anybody, neither the rich nor the poor, making all solicitous and worried to somehow maintain themselves in pomp and pretension.

"That these luxuries could not have been obtained without

incurring huge expenses, had led to heavy taxation on the cultivators, traders and craftsmen. These classes were pressed hard to pay exorbitant levies and if they refused to pay them, expeditions were sent against them and they were punished for insubordination. On the other hand, if they complied with these enervating demands, they had to work like asses and bulls tilling the soil and irrigating the fields. They were allowed to breath only to work and had no respite from life-long toils and travail

"An inevitable result of the masses living like beasts of burden was that they could never find any time to give attention to after-life or eternal salvation. These were the times when not a single soul watchful of his religion could be found in a whole country."[47]

Some other Topics

The Shāh then reverts to other topics. In one of it he says that religions spring from the common source, but their laws and rituals differ owing to the need of the people and the time for which they are meant. He goes on to explain why despite their common origin the divergence in rites and observances becomes accountable. After going into the reasons of exhortation, inducement and warning for preaching the faith, the Shāh justifies the need of a religion which abrogates the earlier ones; how such a religion can be saved from aberrations; what are the devices and forms of deviations; how they try to gain acceptance; and, what are the means employed by the *sharī'ah* to prevent these aberrations from finding a way into the true beliefs and practices. He also gives a detailed account of the conditions prevailing in the pagan past and the reforms affected by the holy Prophet.

The Place of Hadīth

The seventh chapter of the *Hujjat* covers the issues relating to *hadīth*, such as, the correct method of appreciating the import

of a *hadīth* and *sunnah*, deduction of laws from them, knowledge handed down by the holy Prophet and the methodology of drawing inferences from them, types and grades of works on *hadīth*, the rules for giving preference to or reconcilation between the *ahādīth* etc. The Shāh's treatment of all these issues is very sharp, clear and effective. He gives examples of differences of opinion on certain minor issues between the companions of the Prophet and their successors, between different juristic schools and those who preferred to follow the *ahādīth* directly, and gives the reasons therefor. He describes in considerable detail, the way people used to enquire and ascertain legal injunctions upto the fourth century of Islamic era (the tenth century A. D.). This description is also unique and enlightening and not touched upon in other theological and legal works.

Duties and Devotions

The Shāh has deliberated upon the *ahādith* dealing with creed devotional exercises, transactions, piety and self-purification, stages of spiritual ascent, lawful means of earning a living, abjuration and cooperation, management of affairs, caliphate, judiciary, *jihād*, etiquettes, social relationships, temptations of later times, forebodings and auguries of the doomsday, in short. all matters of importance, on which any light is shed by the sayings and doings of the holy Prophet. He also presents, in this way. a quintessence of the life and character of the Prophet (peace be upon him). A distinguishing feature of his exposition is that all these issues are linked with the behaviour and morals and culture of mind and manners of the people. Actually, the Shāh intended to demonstrate how *hadīth* could be utilized to influence the way of life and help man in all the diverse situations. At the same time, he also demonstrated their compatibility with reason. The Shāh had foreseen that the significance and utility of *hadīth* literature would be assailed by its detractors in the near future and hence he wanted to provide a shield against mental confusion resulting from the denial of *hadīth*. The Shāh's elucidation of the four ritual devotions of Islam is simply

incomparable and perhaps the most distinctive part of the *Hujjat.* We are giving here, by way of example, a few extracts from it which shed light on the rationale and wisdom of *saum* (fasting) and *hajj* (pilgrimage).

In regard to judiciousness of prescribing the period and timings of fasting by the *shari'ah,* the Shāh writes: 'If the right to exercise one's own judgement (about the number and timings) of fasting is conceded, it will open the door of evasion; the *shari'ah's* injunctions in regard to commanding the good and forbidding the disreputable will be thwarted; and this foremost mark of obeisance in Islam will fall into negligence."[48]

Again, about the period prescribed for fasting he remarks: 'It was also necessary to determine its period and duration so that no room was left for any excess or slackness. But for it, some people would have observed so little of fasting that it would have become fruitless, while others would have carried it so far as to inflict upon themselves hardships approximating to death through starvation. In truth, fasting is a remedy to counteract the poisonous effects of sensuality and therefore, it is essential that it should be administered in the right quantity."[49]

The Shāh draws a distinction between the two types of fasting i. e., one in which complete abstinence is observed from all the things harmful to the purpose of fasting and the other which allows only partial abstinence. He says that the former is desirable from the view-point of human psychology and experience as well as justified by reason.

> "There are two ways of restricting one's diet. One is to reduce the quantum of diet and the other is to have such a long interval between two meals that this object is achieved. *Shari'ah* recommends the latter course since it is symptomatic of a correct appraisal of hunger and thirst and strikes at the root of carnal appetites, and a definite reduction in whose force and intensity is achieved by it. On the contrary, in the former case these results are not obtained owing to continuity of meals. Besides, it is not possibe to lay

down any general rule in the former case because circumstances differ from person to person. A man may be used to taking half a seer of food while for the other only half of it may be sufficient. Thus, if any restriction of this kind were to be prescribed it would be favourable to one but harmful for the other."[50]

The Shāh points out that moderation should be the rule in determining the duration of fasting.

"It is again desirable that the duration of fasting should not be so long as to entail unbearable hardship as, for instance, three days and three nights; for, this would not be in keeping with the objective of the *shari'ah* besides being impracticable for most of the people."[51]

In the case of *haj* also, the Shāh is incomparable in his reasoning. He writes:

"One of the objectives of the *haj* is the preservation of the legacy of Prophet Ibrāhīm and Prophet Ismā'īl, both of whom can rightly be claimed as the leaders and founders of *millat-i-hanifi* in Arabia. The blessed Prophet was raised up to make this *millat* victorious and dominant in the world.

"The declaration of God that *the faith of your father Ibrahim is yours*[52] makes it incumbent on us to protect the inheritance of the leader of this *millat* by cultivating his personal characteristics[53] and conserving the rituals of *haj*. As the holy Prophet once said. "Stay at places set apart for the *haj* for you are the inheritor of your father's legacy."[54]

Giving another reason for the *haj* being made an obligatory observance the Shāh says:

"Just as it is necessary for a government to undertake a periodical survey to know who is loyal to it and who is disloyal, who is a conscientious worker and who is a shirker, and also that, through it, its power and

authority may increase and its citizens and officials come closer and know one another, the *millat* too stands in the need of *haj* in order that the true believers may be separated from the hypocrites and the people may come in ranks to the *darbar* (royal court) of Allah; they may know each other and profit from their company in matters good and desirable—for these things are generally acquired by closer acquaintance and association."[55]

"Since the *haj* is an occasion on which people come together, it serves as an effective protection against sinful customs and practices. Nothing can compare with it in so far as recalling the memory of the leaders and mentors of the *millat* and engendering the urge for emulating their example are concerned."[56]

At another place the distinguished scholar remarks:[57]

"Included among the objects of *haj* is the purpose for which governments hold fairs and exhibitions. People come from far and near to see them, they meet one another and learn about the precepts of their state and pay their respects to its hallowed places. In the same way, the *haj* is the fair or exhibition of Muslims in which a display of their glory is made, their energies are pooled together and the name of their community shines in the world. It is stated in the Quran:

And (remember) when We made the House (of K'aba) a resort for mankind and a place of refuge."[58]

Comprehensibility of the Hujjat

Another feature of the book is that apart from law, *hadith*, creed, devotions and transactions it also goes on to discuss management of affairs, caliphate, judiciary, professional behaviour and etiquettes which normally fall in the sphere of morals, sociology and civics and are not expected to be dealt with in any theological or legal treatise.

Spirit of Piety and Self-Purification

The Shāh has, in addition to the discussion on above-mentioned topics, tried to present a well-coordinated system, in the light of the Qur'ān and the examples set by the holy Prophet, which can help man to attain propinquity to God and advance spiritually to the higher stages. The section dealing with *ihsān* or the spirit of piety extends from page 66 to 110. In it he recommends only that process of spiritual purification which is attested by genuine *ahādith*. He lays emphasis on deeming oneself in Divine presence, sincerity of intention and firm determination as the necessary aids of spiritual contemplation and prescribes curative measures by way of accepted devotions and remembrances for the troubles and worries that beset the path of spiritual progress. He also analyses the causes of ignoble conduct, suggests measures for getting rid of them and acquiring moral virtues through the ways commended by the *shari'ah* and *sunnah* of the blessed Prophet.

The Shāh has, in this connection, presented a compendium of invocations handed down from the Prophet, supplications approved by the *shari'ah* and entreaties for repentance and explained the conditions necessary for their being answered by God. He does not lose sight of the physical needs of man but insists on sincerity of intention and complete presence of mind and heart and explains the resulting effect in the absence of these imperatives. He says:

> "Let it be understood clearly that intention is the spirit and devotion represents its body. The body cannot remain alive without soul, but the soul remains in existence after it has departed the body. Still, life cannot be perceived in the absence of the body.
>
> "That is why Allah says: 'Their flesh and their blood reach not Allah, but the devotion from you reaches him.'[59]
>
> "And the Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings) is reported to have said: Actions depend on intentions."

The Shāh then explains the *niyat* or intention in these words:

"By *niyat* or intention I mean that positive mental attitude which induces one to do something with the confirmation that the reason for doing a thing or abstaining from it is the assurance by God, through his apostles, to reward those who will obey Him and punish those who will disobey Him."[60]

Before concluding this section, the Shāh has given a selection of *ahādith* talking about inculcatian of moral virtues, discharging the rights of the people and betaking a virtuous way of life which can be helpful in attaining personal excellence, piety and spiritual progress. He has also given the different stages and stations of spiritual flight which enlighten soul, create a living awareness of God, purify the self and prepare man for earning the pleasure of God—all conducive to gaining approval of the celestial regions and supreme happiness.

Jihād

Shāh Waliullah devotes a chapter of the *Hujjat* to *jihād*.[61] It begins with words which are both startling and thought-provoking; which could have been written only by one who had given thought to rise and fall of nations and the divine purpose behind creation of the universe.

"Know that only that *shari'ah* is complete and perfect which enjoins *jihād*."[62]

The Shāh has thereafter elucidated the purpose of *jihād*, justified it both on rational grounds and religious imperatives and described its merits and the reasons therefor.[63]

In short, this work is unique in its comprehensiveness and depth as well as in presenting an integrated view of Islamic teachings and wisdom of the *shari'ah*. It also abounds in sagacious and well-thought-out remarks dispersed on its pages. 'Allama Shibli has correctly assessed the worth of this work in his *'Ilm-al-Kalām* in these words;

"The intellectual decline that had set in among the

Muslims after Ibn Taimiyah and Ibn Rushd, or rather in their own times, had left no hope that another mastermind would again rise among them. But the Providence had perhaps to display its feat that a man like Shāh Waliullah was born latterly whose acumen has overshadowed even the brightness of Ghazzāli, Rāzi and Ibn Rushd."

He writes further:

The Shāh has not written any work on theology and hence it would not be proper to consider him a theologian but his book entitled *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* which expounds the rationale and wisdom of *shari'ah*, is in fact a masterpiece of theology."[64]

Another eminent scholar Maulana 'Abdul Haq Haqqāni, the author of *Tafsīr Haqqāni* and *'Aqā'id-i-Islām* introduces the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* in his own translation of the book under the name of *Ni'amat Allāh is-Sābigha* in these words:

"This work is on a subject none had ventured to write earlier on it. The benefits of the Islamic *shari'ah* is the topic of the work and the purpose of writing it is to let everybody know that the commandments of God and His Apostle do not circumscribe the life of man in any way, nor are they against human nature. That this exposition may create an attraction in man's heart for these teachings so that he may never abandon them under the influence of any dissembler. The secrets and wisdom of religious injunctions have been manifested in it with the help of all the different branches of learning."[65]

Notes and References:

1. Among my contemporary Arab seholars I have found 'Allama 'Allāl al-Fāsi of Moracco, author of *Maqāsid al-Shari'ah al-Islāmiyah wa Makārimha* and al-Ustāz Muhammad al-Mubārak, Ex-Director

of Kulliyāt as-Sharī'ah and a minister of Syrian government acclaiming the *Hujjat*. They have paid glowing compliments to the work.

2. See the Author's *Role of Hadith in the Promotion of Islamic Climate and Attitudes*, Lucknow, 1982.
3. Introduction to *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, p. 3.
4. *Ihtisab* according to the terminology of *hadīth* and *sunnah* connotes the conviction or absolute confidence in the recompence promised by God on acting on a religious precept as well as the eagerness and earnestness generated by such a conviction. Bukhāri records a *hadīth*: 'Whoever observed fast in Ramadhān out of sincere faith and hoping for the reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven.' A similar *hadīth* has been narrated about the *Lailatul Qadr*.
5. Introduction to *Hujjat*, p. 3.
6. *Ibid*,, p. 6.
7. *Ibid*., pp. 5-6.
8. *Ibid*., p, 7.
9. *Ibid*., p, 9.
10. Introduction to *Hujjat*, p. 9.
11. *Ibid*., p, 3.
12. *Ibid*., p. 4.
13. *Hujjat Allāh al Bāligha* was first printed at the instance of Jamāl-ud-dīn a scholar-Minister of Bhopal (d. 1299/1882) who also met the cost of printing the work in 1286/1869 by Matb'a Siddiqi, Delhi, under the supervision of Muhammad Ahsān Siddiqi (d. 1312/1894).. It was reprinted again under the orders of Nawāb Syed Siddiq Hasan Khān (d. 1307/1890) in 1296/1879 by the Matb'a Bulaq, Egypt, where it was reprinted twice thereafter. In 1395/1978. 'Ata Ullah Hanif brought out an off-set of the Egyptian edition from Al-Maktaba Al-Salfia, Lahore. Another edition of the work has recently been brought out jointly by Dār al-Kutub, Cairo and Maktabatul Muthanna, Baghdad, with a detailed introduction of the author from the pen of well-known scholar and the leader of Ikhwan, Syed Sābiq. But the work still needs careful editing and annotation.

    Two translations of this work have been published in Urdu. The first of it, in two parts, was the rendering of an erudite scholar 'Abdul Haq Haqqāni under the title of the *Ni'amat Allāh as-Sābigha*.

The translation, completed in 1393/1886, was printed at Matb'a Ahmadi, Patna in 1312/1895. It was reprinted by Noor Muhammad from As'hahul Matābi'e, Ārām Bāgh, Karachi. Another Urdu rendering of the book by Khalīl Ahmad Israeli under the title *Āyat-Allāh al-Kāmilah* has been brought out by Matb'a Islāmi.

But the *Hujjat* is not one of those works whose literal rendering in any other language can adequately serve the purpose and that is why Urdu knowing people have not been able to derive benefit from it.

14. The words in the Quran "Verily We ! We offered the trust" in verse 33 : 72 refers to moral responsibility which is the human sense of answerability for his conduct. The 'trust' is obviously the trust of free choice to abide by Divine commandments. See *Hujjat*, p. 19.

15. *Hujjat*, p. 20.

16. *Rabubiyat* rendered as sustenance embraces a wide complex of meanings not easily expressed by a single word in English. It comprises the ideas of complete authority and ownership over anything as well as rearing, sustaining and fostering it from its inception to final completion.

17. *Hujjat*, pp. 20-24.

18. The Shāh has explained *'ālam-i-mithāl* (the world of similitude) and *mala'i'ala* (superior angelic sphere) in his works. The two concepts are drawn from the Qur'ān and the *hadīth*.

19. *Hujjat*, p. 25.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

22. This rendering of *irtifāqāt* is by Maulana Abdul Haq Haqqani.

23. *Hujjat*, p. 44.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

25. *Ibid.*, p, 44.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

29. Giving an example of such parasites the Shāh mentions those soldiers, scholars, mystics, poets and other similar groups of persons who get used to the bounties of the royal court or fief holders without rendering any service to the state. He critises the

feudal system which was eating into the vitals of the state finances and maintaining an assemblage of indolent and contemptible persons. This shows the Shāh's insight into the causes of the downfall of Mughal empire.

30. *Hujjat*, p. 45.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 56 gives the details.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58 give the details.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
39. The matter has been dealt with in the fifth chapter of this book.
40. Detailed discussion can be found in second part of the work.
41. *Hujjat*, p. 73.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.
43. Q. 3 : 110.
44. *Hujjat*, p. 84.
45. *Ibid.*, p 86.
46. The allusion is to the later Mughal Kings and princes.
47. *Hujjat*, Vol. I, p. 104—107.
48. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 37.
49. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 37.
50. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 37.
51. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 31.
52. Q. 22 : 78.
53. The term refers to ten characteristics : the cutting or trimming of moustaches, the growing of beard, the brushing the teeth with *miswāk* (twig), the cleaning of the nose with water, the cutting of the nails, the washing of the phalanges of fingers, the plucking of the hairs of the armpit, the removal of the hair under the naval, the purification after urination with water and circumcission. (Abū Dāwūd on the authority of 'Āyesha). About the tenth item the narrator says that he was not sure if it was circumcission or rin-

sing of mouth but Qāzi 'Āyāz and Imām Nawawi are definite that it was circumcission.

54. *Hujjat* Vol, II, p. 42.

55. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 59-60.

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 42.

58. Q. 2 : 125.

59. Q. 22 : 37.

60. *Hujjat*, Vol. II, pp. 83-84.

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 170-178.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

64. Shibli N'omāni, *Ilm-ul-Kalām*, pp. 109-110.

65. Haqqāni, 'Abdul Haq, *Nia'mat Allāh āl-Sābigha*, Introduction.

VIII

Right Guided Caliphate
Izalat al-Khafa 'an Khilafat al-Khulfa

Significances of Izālat al-Khafā

Another remarkable work by Shāh Waliullah, the *Izālat al-Khafā 'an-Khilāfat al-Khulfā,'* is also an incomparable work in several respects. As scholarly and gripping work which exhibits the depth of the Shāh's thought as well as his brightness and profound reflection over the Quranic verses. Anyone who goes through it, unless he is not biased, will be convinced that the author is not merely a schoolman but blessed with divine grace and intuition in composing this work. The Shāh himself says in its introductory remarks:

> "The fact is that divine effulgence inundated the heart of this weakling with the knowledge about this matter so exhaustively that he was absolutely convinced that affirmation of the caliphate of these persons (the first four caliphs) constituted one of the fundamental principles of Islamic creed. So long as this essential foundation is not firmly established, none of the *shari'ah's* injunctions will find a sound and secure support."[1]

Several eminent scholars who were deemed as masters in the science of logical reasoning but differed with the Shāh on a number of issues, had to acknowledge his erudition and penetra-

ting perception on going through this work. The author of *Al-Yãn'e al-Jani*, Muhsin b. Yahya of of Tirhut says: "I noticed that whenever our mentor Maulana Fazl-i-Haq Khairābādi (d. 1278/1861) had some leisure, he was engrossed in a particular book. We found his gripping interest in the book unusual and tried to find out what was that work and who was its author. One day our teacher remarked, 'The author of this book is an ocean of immense expanse.' We then came to know that it was *Izālat al-Khafā* of Shāh Waliullah, a copy of which had somehow reached the Maulana."[2]

Among the celebrated scholars of the later times Maulana 'Abdul Hai Firangi Mahli (d. 1304/1887) was an outstanding academician. In his well-known work *At-T'aliq al-Mumjadda 'ala Muwatta al-Imām Muhammad* he says that "*Izālat al-Khafā* is the solitary and matchless book on its subject."[3]

Correlation between Hujjat Allāh and Izālat al-Khafā

In the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, the Shāh had presented a coordinated and comprehensive concept of Islam with reference to its way of life, culture, customs and social organisation. In it the Shāh had demonstrated that a healthy and vigorous society avoiding all excesses could not come into existence without accepting the creed of Islam and acting on the principles laid down by it for social behaviour. This scholarly work contained material which could satisfy the inquisitive minds and the intellectuals of the coming generations, but there still remained the need to elucidate the characteristics of a truly Islamic society, its objective and sphere of activity. He had to show, in the light of history as well as the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*, that the institution of *khilāfat* (caliphate) was meant to furnish a practical example to be followed by Muslims for all times to come. This was also necessary in order to clear the misunderstandings created long ago about this institution which had given birth to a schism in Islam. In fact, the predominance of Iranian nobility in the days of the Shāh had given rise to a sort of intellectual anarchy among the Muslims which had shaken not only their creed and social

behaviour but also endangered the continuance of their authority over the country. It had, in fact, made uncertain the future of Muslims in the country.

Contrary to the general opinion held by the populace who were not aware of the history and fundamental precepts of this splinter group. nor had any knowledge of their authoritative works, this faction was not just another juristic school within Islam. Its concept of Islam was different from that based on the Qur'ān and the *sunnah* and the grandeur and finality of prophethood. It was a school of thought in itself, running parallel to the accepted view of Islam. Its creed about Imamate, which makes it equal or even superior to prophethood in certain aspects is enough to bring out its fundamental difference with the accepted creed of Islām.[4]

In the prelude to the *Izālat al-Khafā*, the Shāh explains why he came to write it:

> "This mendicant Waliullah says that innovations of the Shi'ah's have taken roots and the common people have been deeply impressed by them. This has created doubts and unseemly ideas in the minds of certain persons about the right-guided caliphs."[5]

The Shah was not merely concerned with the doubts harboured by the people about the first four caliphs, his anxiety was even greater on account of the logical deductions that follow from this lack of confidence as, for example, the failure of Islam in its earliest times, inefficacy of the guidance provided by the holy Prophet, default in the preservation of the Qur'ān in its prestine purity, mistrust in the *sunnah* and *hadith* literature etc. He, therefore, says that "anyone who tries to question the legitimacy of the right-guided caliphate really tries to deny the basic principles of Islam. Such a man wants to demolish all the religious branches of learning."[6] Thereafter he adds: "In the transmission of the Qur'ān from the blessed Prophet to his followers, the right-guided caliphs constitute an essential link."[7]

The Shāh asserts that everything connected with religion like *hadīth*, *fiqh*, consensus on any legal issue, unification of

the Muslim community, the spirit of piety later known as mysticism, sagacity in religious matters, discrimination between virtuous and vicious behaviours, civility and polity have been bequethed to the later generations by the first four caliphs. The entire *ummah* is obliged to them for their guidance.[8]

The reasonable and consistent course, after writing the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, which contained an intellectual and rational exposition of Islam, was that the Shāh should demonstrate how successfully these teachings had been translated into practical life and what was its effect on the society fashioned by it. He had to show how the corrupting influences of two rival civilizations nurtured by the age-old Byzantine and Sassanid empires were uprooted by this new civilization.

Earlier Writings on the Subject.

Islamic social order, state and its functions had been dealt with earlier only in a few treatises and these, too, were neither comprehensive nor possessed any depth. The first work on the subject was *Kitāb-ul-khirāj* by Imām Abu Yūsuf (113-182/731-797), a disciple of Imām Abu Hanīfa who also held the post of chief justice under the Abbasids, but it covered only the topics like the finances, sources of revenue, imposts etc. of the Islamic State.

Another chief justice Abul Hasan 'Ali b. Muhammad b. Habīb al-Mawardi (364-450/975-1058) wrote *Al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyah wal-Walāyah al-Dīniyah* which was the first notable dissertation on the subject. This work of 259 pages of an average size discussed the issues relating to Imamate and its legal justification, conditions necessary for its establishment, its duties and obligations, qualifications of the judges, charities, *jizyah* (poll-tax), *khirāj* (land-tax), punishments, regulation of law and order etc. It did not offer any comments on the justification of the right-guided caliphate or the character and attainments of the first four caliphs.

Another important work on the subject is *al-Ghiyāthi* or *Ghiyāth al-Umam fi al-Tiyāth al-Zulm*[9] which was written by the

great scholar and teacher of Imām Ghazzali, Abul Ma'āli 'Abdul Malik al-Juwaini (419-478/1028-1085), also known as Imām-ul-Haramayn or the religious preceptor of the two holy mosques. The work was in fact indited for the benefit of Nizām-ul-Mulk Tūsi (408-485/1017-1092), the Prime Minister of Malik Alp Arsalān and his son Malik Shāh Saljūqi, under whose able guidance the empire of Saljūqs reached its apogee.[10] This work deals with the injunctions of *shariah* in regard to Imamate, the qualities to be possessed by an Imām and his duties, administration of justice etc. It also goes on to discuss such questions as the course to be adopted by Muslims in the absence of an Imām or an unrighteous person usurping the Imamate by force of arms. Similarly, it examines such questions as obligation lying on Muslims in the absence of juris-consults mainly from a Shaf eite point of view. It, however throws no light on the importance and justification of the right-guided caliphate. The book s really a dissertation on the concept of Imamate and its main purpose is to refute the views expressed in Al-Māwardi's *Al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyah*

The third noteworthy work on this subject is *As-Siyāsah al-Shar'iyah fi Islāh al-Rā'iy wa al-Ra'iyyah* by Shaikh ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah (661-728/1263-1328). In his introduction to this slim volume Ibn Taimiyah makes it clear that the purpose of writing this work is simply to narrate those fundamental postulates of the righteous state deputising for the prophethood which are equally binding on the rulers and the ruled. In fact this work by Ibn Taimiyah is an exposition of the Quranic verse

> "Lo! Allah commandeth you that ye restore deposits to their owners, and if ye judge between mankind, that ye judge justly.........That is better and more seemly in the end."[11]

The book[12] is divided into two parts; the first deals with *Al-Wilāyah* (public authority) and *Al-Amwāl* (finances) and the second discusses the limitations imposed by God and the obligation one ows to God and his fellow beings. This work by Ibn Taimiyah skips the legal and theological aspects and even the

historical role of the first four caliphs although he was most competent to examine these issues. Had he decided to do so, he would have undoubtedly made a great and worthwhile contribution to the subject. He has discussed some of these matters in the *Minhāj al-Sunnah* in which his fluent pen and encyclopaedic knowledge combine to present a refreshing account of the right-guided caliphate.[13]

Concept of Khilāfah in Islam.

The Qur'ān and the *hadīth* imply a cohesive community of the believers in the message of Islam preached by the holy Prophet. The expressions *ummah, millah* and *jamā·ah* convey this sense of cohesion since these terms are nowhere employed in the scripture and the *sunnah* just for a mob or multitude of people which never leave any lasting impression in the history of nations and civilizations. The Qur'ān rather speaks of bygone nations and distinct communities - sometimes giving the reasons for their prowess and domination, weakness and defect, incompetency of large numbers, wrongs being committed in the presence of righteous persons, ascendancy of the evil and suppression of the people—which demonstrate that a disorganised mob, howsoever numerous, has never had any worth or utility.

The great objective Islam has in view comprises the creation of a new type of relationship between the Creator and the creature and transformation of this bond into the life of the people in order to build a healthy social structure. It also wants to create a wholesome atmosphere in which peace reigns supreme and offers the fullest opportunity to the individual to discharge his obligations to God as well as to his fellow beings. It wants to create conditions in which man is enabled to develop himself morally and spiritually without being required to waste his energies and talents in removing the obstacles or fighting the disruptive forces which are inevitable in a disorganised society or very often result from man-made laws or an autocratic rule, or else mans's lust for power. A social set-up avoiding these pit-falls requires a God-given law having its roots in the overlordship of God and a

human caliphate to actualize the Divine will. Such a God-given law has, of necessity, to be obsolutely just, impartial and faultless while the caliphate has to enforcc it in its true spirit and avoid, as far as it is humanly possible, favouritism and partisanship in any form either through commission or omission.

In order to achieve these social and moral objectives the Prophet has given instructions which are meant to transform Muslims into an orderly and well-knit society under a chief having distinctive qualities. He looks after their needs and interests. He is elected in the light of broad and flexible principles laid down by the *sharī'ah*. If he is the supreme administrator he is known as *Khalifah* or *Amīr-ul-Mūminīn* or *Imōm* but if he is a deputy nominated by the head of state or a locally elected executive to enforce the laws of *sharī'ah*, or to act as a judge in their disputes or to organise the community's religious life, he is called an *Amīr*.

The election of the caliph was a religious obligation so grave and urgent that all those companions of the Prophet who loved him most including Abu Bakr and members of the Prophet's household gave it precedence over the burial rites of the departed Prophet.. The same procedure was followed after the death of almost all the subsequent caliphs. Ever since the election of Abu Bakr as the first caliph in 10/631 to the martyrdom of the Abbasid Caliph Mu'tasim Billah in 656/1258 the world of Islam never remained without a caliph except for a short period of three months and seven days when Caliph Mustarshid Billāh was imprisoned on the 10th of Ramadhan 529/ 24th June, 1135 by the Saljukid Sultan Mas ūd. But it was such a shocking and lamentable experience for the Muslims of the day that the whole city of Baghdad felt dejected and disconsolate. Ibn Kathīr writes about this event:

> ' It gave the people of Baghdad cold shivers and everyone felt extremely agitated. Certain persons dismantled the pulpits in the mosques, discontinued offering congregational prayers and women came out of their houses bare-headed lamenting and weaping at the

imprisonment and hardships of the caliph. People in other cities took the cue from citizens of Baghdad and the outcry spread rapidly to different regions. Malik Sanjar who gauged the gravity of the situation, advised his nephew to reinstate the Caliph and Malik Mas'ūd followed his advice."[14]

The elegy by poet S'adi of Shirāz, belonging to a city far distant from the centre of caliphate, on the martyrdom of Caliph Must'asim Billāh reveals the intensity and depth of regard Muslims had for the caliph. The elegy opens with the couplet:

For it has seen the kingdom of Must'asim crushed,
The heavens would better shed the tears of blood.

These events demonstrate the great regard Muslims had for caliphate and how disconsolate they felt in its absence.

A comprehensive Definition of Khilāfah

The Shāh was able to define caliphate, because of his deep insight into the scripture and the *sunnah*, law, theology and history of Islam, in a comprehensive yet precise manner. The words used by him for delineation of the concept are extremely suggestive. He writes:

"*Khilāfah* is the leadership of people united in a commonwealth which comes into existence for the establishment of religion including revival of religious branches of learning, institution of Islamic ritual observances, organisation of *jihād* and making necessary arrangements for the same as, for example, marshalling an army, remunerating the combatants and distributing the booty among them, creating a judicial system and enforcing the laws, curbing of crimes and removing public grievances, commanding the good and forbidding the wrong etc. All these functions have to be preformed by it as if it were deputizing and representing the Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings)."[15]

The Shāh goes on further to explain the term 'establishment

of religion' in these words :

> "When we take a view of the matter inductively proceeding from the particular to general propositions converging on a universal principle covering all the categories, we reach the conclusion that at the highest level of Universal principle comprising the common as well as special categories (that is, the Universal of univerals), it coincides with the truth that can be called the 'establishment of religion'. All other classes and categories are covered by it. One of the subordinate categories is the revival of religious knowledge which consists of the teaching of the Qur'ān and the *sunnah* and admonition and sermonizing. God says: "He it is who hath sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own, to recite unto them His revelations and to purify them, and to teach them the scripture and wisdom, though they have been before in gross error."[16]

Quranic Evidence in Favour of First Four Caliphs.

The most fascinating portion of this work is that in which the Shāh adduces Quranic verses in support of the caliphate of the first four caliphs. It demonstrates that they were rightly-guided to actualise the will of God in the given circumstances. The Shāh cites Quranic verses which clearly show (sometimes like a mathematical calculation) that no other person than these caliphs were hinted at in them for they alone were able to fulfil the prophecies contained in those verses. The Shāh shows that if the period during which these caliphs held the reins of caliphate were to be ignored, the Quranic predictions and promises would remain unfulfilled.

Of the various verses from the Qur'ān cited by the Shāh, we are giving here only two by way of illustration. One of these is a verse from the *Sūrat-un-Nūr* which reads :

> "Allah has promised those of you who believe and do good works that He shall make them to succeed (the

present rulers) in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed (others), and that He shall surely establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and He shall certainly give them in exchange security after fear. They shall serve Me and ascribe nothing as partner unto Me. And those who disbelieve thereafter, then those! they are the ungodly."[17]

The Shāh then says that the promises relating to *succeeding (the present rulers) in the earth* and *giving them in exchange security after fear* were made to the believers who were present at the time of revelation of *Sūrat-un-Nūr*; they were the companions of the holy Prophet and were striving for the cause of Islam. Therefore, the Shāh concludes, these assurances could not apply to Mu'awiyah and 'Abbās and their progeny. He adds that it was neither possible nor reasonable to deem that the entire Muslim community was to *succeed* the then rulers or be elevated to the office of caliphate; the divine pledge had of necessity to be redeemed through certain chosen individuals. Thereafter he writes:

"The expression *He shall surely make them to succeed* implies that a group among them will succeed as caliphs; obedience to God was the condition precedent for it; and, when this promise is fulfilled the religion shall have power and authority to establish, express and expose itself completely It also refutes the Shi'ite contention that the religion acceptable to God shall ever remain hidden and clandestine requiring its Imāms to practise *taqaiyah* or dissimulation. This is the reason given by them for duplicity of their Imāms who never had the courage to announce their creed publicly. The words *He shall surely establish for them their religion which He has approved* are clear enough to show that the religion which could not be publicly made known during the period when Muslim *succeeded (the earlier rulers)* was certainly not the

religion *which He has approved*.........The verse also says ; *He shall certainly give them in exchange security after fear* which shows that when the divine guarantee comes to materialise, those who succeed and all other Muslims will be unscared of any danger or apprehension f om the side of any religion or power. Contrarily, the Shi'ites claim that their Imāms were timid and diffident, they and their colleagues always pocketed insults and affronts and they never came out successful............The divine assurance for making *them to succeed in the earth* was fulfilled through those first migrants in the way of God--for if these were not the successors or the caliphs, then the promise made by God has not been accompalished, nor shall it come to pass to the end of time—Allah is most sublime and Great from all these imputations."[14]

Another verse discussed in some detail by the Shāh belongs to *Sūr it-ul-Fath*. Briefly speaking, the Shāh narrates how in the sixth year of the *Hijrah*, the Prophet set out with a large number of his companions, on account of his dream of paying a visit to the K'aba, in the garb of pilgrims for performing *'Umrah* or the lesser pilgrimage. Because of the opportunity afforded for visiting the House of God as well as the apprehensions in regard to the inimical attitude of the Quraysh who still held the power in Makkah, some 1400 Muslims from Madinah accompanied the Prophet but the Bedouins held back either owing to fear or lack of sincerity. The historic pact of Hudaybiyah guaranteeing cession of hostilities between the Muslims and Qurayesh came to be signed as a result of it which has been described in detail in the works on *hadith* and biographies of the Prophet. It was at Hudaybiyah that the holy Prophet took the pledge of allegiance from his companions, known as *Bay·et-i-Rizwān*, and all those who took pledge were given the glad tidings of a clear victory in the near future through a revelation from God. The *Sūrat-ul-Fath* revealed on this occasion did not only promise the victory (the conquest of Khaybar in the beginning of 7/629) but also declared

that the desert Arabs who had lagged behind on this crucial moment will not be allowed to take part in the victorious expedition promised by God. The verse placing this ban on the Bedouins said :

> "Those who were left behind will say, when ye set forth to capture booty; let us go with you. They fain would change the verdict of Allah Say! Ye shall not go with us. Thus hath Allah said beforehand. Then they will say: Ye are envious of us Nay, but they understand not, save a little."[19]

The revelation went on to say that though the Bedouins were forbidden to join the oncoming victorious expedition as a penalty for their malingering, they would soon thereafter be called upon to fight a people who would, first, be formidable and well-equipped, and secondly, shall fight or surrender The Bedouins were also forewarned that if they would respond to the call to arms on that occasion, Allah will bless them with the choicest rewards. On the other hand. if they pretended to escape duty as they did on the earlier occasion, they would be punished severely. The verse in question reads :

> Say unto those of the wandering Arabs who were left behind : Ye will be called against a folk of mighty prowess, to fight them until they surrender : and if ye obey, Allah will give you a fair reward ; but if ye turn away as ye did turn away before, He will punish you with a painful doom.[20]

Shāh Waliullah then argues that the words *ye will be called* clearly suggest that the desert Arabs who had not accompanied the Prophet on the occasion of the treaty of Hudaybiyah, were to be called to take up arms against a people who would be offered only two choices, to fight or to surrender (leaving out the third alternative of submitting to the Islamic state on payment of *jizyah)*. This situation did arise during the caliphate of the first Caliph Abu Bakr who fought the apostates of Arabia who were required either to fight or to surrender (and re-enter Islam completely). This verse, says the Shāh, did

not refer to Byzantines or the Persians since they had three alternatives—fighting, surrender or payment of *jizyah*—open to them. Therefore, the Shāh concludes, the verse in question clearly alludes to the caliphate of Abu Bakr who despatched expeditions headed by Khālid to fight the apostates and called upon the desert Arabs to join the armed conflict which was solely for the purpose of forcing apostates to abjure their revisionist version of Islam. This was what the verses in question had clearly alluded since the Islamic law of *jihād*, as applied in the war with the Byzantines and Persians, offered three alternative viz. fighting, acceptance of Islam or payment of *jizyah*. These verses thus clearly pointed out the caliphate of Abu Bakr for it was he who decided to despatch an army to fight the apostates and invited the desert Arabs to join in the expedition. Divine reward and punishment can only be the upshot of the acceptance and rejection of a call given by a right-guided caliph.[21]

Other Topics of Izālat al-Khafa

Apart from the defence in regard to the righteousness and seemliness of the first four caliphs and their achievements, the work contains a lot of thought-provoking material not usually found in the books on dialectical theology or other works on history and biography. One of these relates to the exposition of distinctive features of the period of first three caliphs,[22] difference between caliphate and kingship,[23] an elucidation of the autocratic form of government and clarification showing that the Ummayed Caliphate did not fall in the category of autocracy. Shāh Waliullah agrees that the period of right-guided caliphate came to end after Caliph 'Ali was assassinated, but he advises not to indulge in vituperative rhetorics in the case of Caliph Mu'āwiyah.[24] However, for the caliphate of Bani Marwān he says :

> 'When 'Abdul Malik b. Marwān took over the reigns of government, the confusion came to end and coercive caliphate, as predicted by the Prophet (on whom be

peace) in several *ahadith*, came into operation."[25]

Another distinguishing feature of the *Izālat al-Khafa* is that the Shāh has given all the juristic opinions and judgements of Caliph 'Umar which presents a clear picture of the Caliph's judicial thought.[26] This was perhaps the first attempt ever made to bring into relief the juristic endeavours of Caliph 'Umar. No work on the subject existed until Dr. Muhammad Rawwas Qilaji (1401/1981) recently compiled a voluminous *Mausu'ata Fiqh 'Umar b. al-Khattāb* (Encyclopaedia of the jurisprudence of Caliph 'Umar) covering 687 pages of a large format. This book has been published by Maktaba al-Falāh of Kuwait.

The Shāh has paid special attention to enumerate the merits and achievement of the first three caliphs. His treatment of the subject is indicative of his own disposition, which, in fact, was the need of hour in his time. However, he is not in the least ungenerous in describing the virtues and excellences of Caliph 'Ali. His description of the members of Prophet's household, including Caliph 'Ali. shows his loving regard for all of them.[27] In his view the martyrdom of Caliph 'Uthman was the first ordeal faced by Islam[28] and the second adversity was that of Husain b. 'Ali. He has cited a *hadith* from *Mishkāt* (which has been taken from *Baihaqi*) predicting that Imām Husain who was like a part of Prophet's body would be slain by the Muslims.[29] He deemed the tragic happenings connected with the expedition of al-Harrah as a continuation of the same scourge which led to the sack of the city of the Prophet.[30] He has severely criticized, where necessary the Ummayed caliphs[31] which goes to make his assessment moderate and balanced, and conforms to the view-point held by the Sunnites.

Woeful Developments following the Prophet's Death.

Another characteristic of this work by the Shāh is that it outlines the intellectual and theological developments along with the religious history of Islam. Innumerable chronological accounts had been written by his time, but none had given a continuous and coordinated description of the intellectual,

educational and moral changes that accompanied the political and cultural developments in Islam. There were certainly works which mentioned such shifts and transformations here and there, but nobody had ever thought of writing anything on this topic. The Shāh has discussed the woeful happenings occurring after the earliest and most excellent period of Islam,[32] differentiated between the doctrinal imperitives of the two periods[33] and described the intrinsic and intellectual permutations resulting with the march of time. He has discussed these matters under the following sub-titles,

(1) Emergence of falsehood, (2) Portentous recitation of the Qur'ān and embellishments in it, (3) Deeming the recitation of the Qur'ān as sufficient and neglecting to ruminate over it, (4) Ratiocination in legal matters and discussion of hypothetical issues, (5) Interpretation of allegorical verses of the Qur'ān and working out novel explanations, (6) Bringing up new issues in regard to creed and Divine essence and attributes, (7) Originating new litanies and recitals for gaining propinquity to God in addition to those taught by the Prophet, (8) Giving equal importance to the commendable acts and obligatory observances, (9) Pronouncing juristic opinions through mutual consultation instead of referring the matter to competent and pious scholars, (10) Birth of new sects like Qadariyah (believers in free-will) and Murjiyah (the procrastinators), (11) Expiration of mutual confidence among Muslims (12) Rise of such rulers who were either not eligible or were mediocres, and (13) Abandonment or indolence in enforcing the Islamic religious observances.[34]

Izālat al-Khafa was first published, under the orders of Munshi Jamāl-ud-din Khan, the Prime Minister of Bhopal in 1286/1869, by Matb'a Siddiqi, Bareilly under the supervision of Muhammad Ahsan Siddiqi who had three manuscripts of the work, one belonging to Munshi Jamāl-ud-din, the other of Ahmad Husain of Amroha and the third obtained from Nurul Hasan of Kandhla, for collation and editing of the copy prin ed by him. It seems the editor was not able to revise the work

later on. Another edition, printed through the offset process of the first edition was brought out by the Suhail Academy of Pakistan, Lahore in 1396/1976.[35] The work was translated into Arabic through the efforts of Al-Majlis al-'Ilmi, Dhabel, which could not somehow arrange for its publicity in the Arab countries. Maulana 'Abdul Shakūr of Lucknow rendered the first five sections of the book (155 pages) into Urdu. Printed in 1329/1911 by the Umdatul Matāb'e Lucknow, under the title of *Kashf al-Ghita's 'an Sunnat al-Bayzā'*, the book consists of 336 pages.

Notes and References

1. *Izālat al-Khafa*, Vol. I, Suhail Academy, Lahore, p. 1.
2. *Al-Yān'e al-Jani*, p. 93; *Nuzahtul Khawātir*, Vol. VI.
3. *At-T'alīq al-Mumjadda*, p. 25.
4. A recent work of Imām Khumeini, the leader of great Iranian revolution, entitled *Al-Hukūmat al-Islāmiyah*, attributes abiding vicegerency of God to the Imāms whereby they exercise authority over the entire universe and whatever it contains. Writes Imām Khomeini :

   "It is one of the accepted principles of our religion that the Imāms have a degree of nearness to God which is beyond the reach of any angel or prophet. Our traditions and *ahādith* clearly state that the greatest Prophet and the Imāms were lights before the creation of this universe. Allah allowed these lights to encircle His Throne and granted them such nearness and status as is known to God alone."
5. *Izālat al-Khafā*, Vol. I, p. 1.
6. *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 1.
7. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 4.
8. *Ibid.*, Vol, II, p. 6.
9. *Al-Giyathi* has since been published by the government of Qatar in 1400/1980 and covers 611 pages of a large format. It has been edited by Dr. 'Abdul 'Azim al-Adib.
10. For the life of this supremely able Prime Minister, Ibn Khallikān and *Tabaqāt as-Shāfi'yah* can be consulted. In Urdu 'Abdur

Razzāq has written his biography entitled Nizām-ul-Mulk Tusi.

11. Q. 4 : 58-59,
12. The book covers 168 pages of a book of average size.
13. See pp. 127-137 of the *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol, II.
14. Ibn Kathīr, Vol. XII, p. 208.
15. *Izālat al-Khafa*, Vol. I, p. 2.
16. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 2-3 (Q. 72 : 2)
17. Q. 24 : 55
18. *Izālat al-Khafa*, Vol. I, pp. 20-23.
19. Q. 47 : 15.
20. Q. 47 : 16
21. The detailed discussion can be seen on pp. 38-39 of the *Izālat al-Khafa*, Vol. I. Shihāb-ud-din Mahmūd al-Alūsī (d. 1270/1854), author of the well-known commentary on the Qur'ān, *Rūh-al-Ma'āni*, agrees with conclusion drawn by Shāh Waliullah (pp. 101-104).
22. *Izalāt al-Khafa*, Vol. I, pp. 121-22.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 143. In regard to Yazid, he observes in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* that "there were two propagators of unrighteousness, Yazid in Syria and Mukhtār in Iraq." (Vol. II, p. 213). He calls Yazid a hypocrite and unrighteous person (p. 215).
26. *Izālat al-Khafa*, Vol. II, pp. 85-142,
27. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 251-283.
28. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 154.
29. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 154.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 154,
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-55.
32. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 122.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
34. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 133.
35. All references have been given from this edition.

IX

Statesmanship of Shah Waliullah during the period of Political Instability

As stated in the second chapter of this work the decline and disintegration of political power in India coinciding with rampant disorder, lawlessness and demoralization during the 12th century of Hijrah (beginning from the closing decades of the seventeenth century A. D.) had sunk the Indian society in its throes of death. The long rule of the Mughals had been reduced to a symbol devoid of any power, capacity or will to restore its lost glory.

Three new dynamic powers were then emerging within the country—Marathas, Sikhs and Jats—which, it seemed, would decide the fate of the country.

Marathas

The Marathas, first confined to Deccan as agitators and terrorists, were trying to promote ethnic and regional nationalism in order to create a power base for themselves. Growing enervation of the central authority and selfishness of the provincial chiefs, very often scheming against one another and utilizing the Marathas for their petty ends, had converted the Marathas into a power which started dreaming of capturing Delhi and taking the place of the Mughals.

By 1170/1756, Malhar Rao Holkar and Raghunath Rao had been emboldened to lay hands on the northern India.[1] In the year 1164/1751 Safdar Jang, the Nawab of Oudh with the sanction of the young emperor, Ahmad Shāh, and heedless of

the danger of drawing the Marathas into disputes in the very heart of the empire, called in Malhar Rão Holkar from Mālwa, Jayappa Sindia from Nārnaūl, and Sūraj Mal Jāt, to help him against the Bangash Afghans who had invaded Oudh. Najīb-ud-daula was forced to make a pact with the Marathas, Raghunath Rao marched northwards in Sha'aban 1171/April 1757. The Punjab from the Chenab to the areas as far south as the confluence of the Indus and the Panchnad which had been the gateway of India and had never been captured earlier by any non-Muslim potentate, fell into the hands of Marathas. Adīna Beg Khān, who had served many masters and betrayed all, was appointed governor on promising to pay a huge tribute. After the death of Adīna Beg Khān, Jānkoji Sindia appointed Sabaji Bhonsle as the governor of Punjab.

Safdar Jang's folly had enabled Marathas to plunder the neighbouring regions around Delhi lying between the Ganges and Jamuna. Dātāji Sindia now coming from Deccan in 1171/1757 sought to conquer the whole of Hindustan. He advanced towards Bundelkhand and Oudh. He besieged Najīb-ud-daula at Shukartar near Saharanpur, throughout the rainy season of 1193/1779 while another force under Govind Pant Bundele crossed the Ram Ganga and devastated northern Rohilkhand including Amroha, not far away from Delhi.

Sadāshiv Rāo, known as Bhāo, entered Delhi on 9th Dhil Hijjah 1173/24th June 1760 and forced Y'aqub 'Ali to hand over the charge of the Red Fort to him. Shankar Rāo was appointed as the new caretaker of the Fort who stripped off the gold and silver from the ceiling of the great hall of audience for being melted in the mint. He also defaced the tombs and shrines for the sake of rich ornaments and plundered the Qadam Sharīf and the mausoleum of Khwāja Nizām-ud-din Aulia. On 29th Safar, 1174/10th October, 1760 Sadāshiv Bhāo deposed and imprisoned Shāh Jahān III and enthroned Mirza Jawān Bakht, son of Shāh 'Ālam 'Ali Gauhar as the puppet emperor. Bhāo himself wanted to be crowned as the emperor of India but he was dissuaded by his advisors since they thought that the replacement of a Mughal

emperor would create disorder in the country. This was the time when the whole country from the Attock and Himalayas to the extreme limit of the Peninsula was forced to acknowledge the sway of the Maratha confederacy and those tracts not directly administered by them paid them tribute, while their numerous chiefs owed allegience to one man, the Peshwa. The Marathas then had with them a corps of 10,000 sepoys, trained under Bussy on the French model. In the battle of Pānīpat (1761) the Maratha army consisted of 55,000 cavalry, 15,000 infantry and 200 pieces of cannons. Pindaris and Rajputs, as camp-followers of the Marathas, had swelled their strength to a force of three hundred thousand. However, "the Marathas lacked an imperial spirit," writes Vincent A. Smith, "because they were nurtured in defiance rather than imperial ambition and rose to greatness through guerilla tactics rather than regular warfare. These tactics imply inferiority and the Marathas never quite got over this feeling that they were temporary freebooters who must take what they could while they could"[2] Another historian H G. Rowlinson says: "Their *mulkgīri* raids, by destroying the industries and wealth of the countries overrun, merely 'killed the goose which laid the golden eggs.' The Maratha State was a *Krieg Staat*, pure and simple: and it is the fate of the *Krieg Staat*, as Sarkar justly observes, to defeat its own ends. The severity of the Maratha raids, for the collection of *chauth* and other arrears; varied of course, in intensity.[3]" They possessed a Hindu revivalist spirit which had made them impatient and unsuitable for any constructive work for the common weal. But the sympathy which the religious aspect of the Maratha State might have drawn from the Hindus was dissipated by the aspect of plunder which was applied as ruthlessly to Hindus as to Muslims. The instinct to plunder was the internal defect: cutting of noses and ears was the common occurance during plundering raids and no woman was safe from their outrageous behaviour. The high-handed conduct of Sindia and Holkar offended the Rajputs who held aloof from them. Support of the Jāts of Bhartapūr under their leader Suraj Mal had been secured,

but he left in disgust at the arrogance of Bhāo.[4] Jadu Nath Sarkar has cited in his *Fall of the Mughal Empire* an elegy by a Bengali poet Ganga Ram lamenting over the cruelty and despotism of Maratha rulers.

Portuguese travellers like Pissurlen have expressed horror att the inhuman treatment of their subjects by the Marathas. Such was their heartless exploitation of the subject people that a historian, Ghulam 'Ali Āzād Bilgrāmi says, "The only object they had in view was to plunder everything, leaving practically nothing for the sustenance of the people. They exacted *chauth* from the distant dominions of the decaying Mughal Empire, which were usually the target of their depradations."[5]

Plundering raids by the Marathas were simply meant for attaining power and riches, but Hindu revivalism was also a part of their military campaigns. Mountstuart Elphinstone writes in the *History of India* about Shivaji, the first Maratha chief :

> "He had been brought up in a strong Hindu feeling...... and out of this sprang up a rooted hatred to the Musalmans and increasing attachment to his own superstitions. This inclination fell so well in with his policy, that he began to affect peculiar piety, and to lay claim to prophetic dreams and other manifestations of the favour of gods."[6]

Just before the decisive battle of Pānīpat, the state of things in the Maratha camp had become indescribable. Grief and terror prevailed everywhere. At this critical hour Shujā'-ud-daula, who had earlier been inclined towards the Marathas, received a last despairing letter from Bhāo Sahib for arranging a treaty of peace with Abdāli. Shujā'-ud-daula who had had enough of experience of the Marathas bleeding the conquered territories with their insatiable demands, wrote back to Bhāo Sahib which throws ample light on the effects of Maratha rule during the short period of their ascendancy. He said in his reply :

"The Brahmins of Deccan have achieved a dominant

> position over Hindustan for sometime past It is their cupidity and rapacious nature and perfidy and unfaithfulness that has brought the scourge of Shāh Abdāli on us. What treaty of peace is possible with the people who are insensible to the honour and prosperity of others: who deem all goods and chattles belonging to them and their own people. All the peoples have at last been so disgusted with them that they have begged Shāh Abdāli to come from *vilayat*,[7] for they considered that the losses they would have to suffer from his invasion would be preferable than that they were undergoing at the hands of Marathas,"[8]

On January 24, 1761/6th Jamādi-ul- Ākhir, 1174 the combined forces of Ahmad Shāh Abdāli, the Rohilas of Nawab Najīb-ud-daula and the army of Shuja-ud-daula defeated the Maratha confedracy. "Never was a defeat more complete", says Elphinstone, "and never was there a calamity that diffused so much consternation," Most disastrous of all, perhaps, was the fact that it dealt a crushing blow to the emerging power of Marathas. The reasons for the invasion of Ahmad Shāh Abdāli and the effects of this decisive battle will be described later in connexion with role played by Shāh Waliullah at this critical juncture of Indian history.

Sikhs

The Sikh sect which Gurū Bābā Nānak (874-941/1649-1534) had founded aimed at spiritual liberation by means of self-restraint, moral rectitude, searching of the heart and fixed gaze on the One God—"The True, the Immortal, the self-Existant, the Invisible, the Pure" *(alakh niranjan)*. According to the *Sayr-ul-Mutākherīn*, Bābā Nanak received education of Persian from a sufi Shaikh Syed Hasan[9]. The third Gurū Amar Dās introduced many innovations to reform the Hindu society of its social evils which aroused the hostility of the Brahmins.[10] He encouraged inter-caste alliances, remarriage of

widows and forbade the practice of Sati. Empe or Akbar paid a visit to Gurū Amar Dās and was so impressed with his way of life that he assigned the revenues of several villages to the Gurū's daughter, Bhāni, as a marriage gift. The fourth Gurū Rām Dās (941-989/1534-1581) had a tank dug at the site granted to his wife by Emperor Akbar, where he founded a town destined to become the religious capital of the Sikhs.

In 970/1563 Gurū Arjun succeeded his father as the fifth Guru of the Sikhs. In August 1013/1604 he completed the compilation of *Granth Sāhib*, an anthology of the 'sacred' writings of the former gurūs. In the last year of his life he made the mistake of blessing the banners of Khus au, the rival of Jahāngīr for the Mughal th one, and even gave him financial help. On the defeat of the rebel, Jahāngīr fined the Gurū two lakhs of rupees for his collusion with treason. The Gurū was taken to Lahore where he refused to pay anything and was sentenced to death, an usual punishment for refusal to pay the fine in those days.[11]

The execution of Gurū Arjun had a profound impact on the next Gurū Hargobind. He trāined a body of soldiers and spent much time in martial exercises and hunting. He also built a fortress, Lohgarh, in Amritsar. He ordered that at the *Akāl Takht* (the throne of Timeless God) the congregation should chant ballads extolling feats of heroism, and instead of listening to religious discourses plans of military conquests should be discussed. As the number of Gurū's retainers increased, who sometimes went on plundering raids, the local officials began sending reports to the Emperor. Jahāngir ordered the arrest of Hargobind and his detention in the Gwalior fort. He was released after a year or more of imprisonment, but he again resumed his martial activity, only a little more discreetly, and succeeded in raising his private army. He next provoked war with Shāh Jahān by encroaching on the Emperor's game preserve and attacking the servants of the imperial hunt. Pursued by the royal army, he was forced to seek refuge in Kirartpur, in the Kashmir hills, where he died in 1054/1644.

Then followed the peaceful pontificate of Gurū Har Rai (1054-72/1644-61), a disputed succession between his two sons, and early death of the infant heir Gurū Har Kishan (1066-75/1656-64) After a time Gurū Tegh Bahādur, the youngest son of Hargobind succeeded in being recognised as Gurū by the Sikh community. "Tegh Bahādur undertook an extensive tour of the Punjab" says Khushwant Singh, "Wherever he went he attracted great crowds and was given handsome donations by his admirers. His exhortation to the people to stand firm could not have been platable to the government. He was summoned to Delhi. Mughal officers who carried the summons to Anandpur reported him missing. He was declared an absconder and a warrant was issued for his arrest. He was apprehended along with a band of devotees, at Agra, brought to Delhi, and arraigned before the Kazi's court" Tegh Bahādur was sentenced to death and executed on 19th Ramadhān 1086/ November 11, 1675 when Aurangzib was away to Hasan Abdāl disciplining the recalcitrant frontier tribesmen on the north-west. Gurū Gobind Singh succeeded his father and tried to organise the Punjab peasantry against the excesses of local officials, Rājas and zamindārs of the Punjab hills. His private army even included five hundred Pathans.[12] Soon he came into conflict with the Rajas of Kalhur, Bilāspūr, Jiswāl etc. The Rajas on being defeated by the Gurū appealed to the Emperor for help. Aurangzīb sent his son Mo'azzam and General Mirza Beg to the Punjab for restoration of law and order and collection of arrears of revenue. A Sikh chroniclar Gur Bilās maintains that General Mirza Beg had secret instructions from the Emperor not to bother Gurū Gobind Singh who was left unmolested and was able to turn his unbounded energy to reorganising the community. It is also stated that when Aurangzīb was nearing his death he summoned Gurū Gobind Singh promising him good treatment. However, Aurangzīb died in 1707, when the Gurū was on his way to meet the Emperor. "Guru Gobind Singh's letter to the Emperor (i. e. *Zafarnāma*) reveals." according to Gurmit Singh, "that the Guru

had all the admiration for the personal qualities of the Emperor and his opposition to Aurangzīb was certainly not based on any personal consideration, or inspired by any sense of wrong done to him or his family and he had no ill-feeling against Aurangzib."[13] Prince Mo'azzam, who ascended the throne after Aurangzīb, as Bahādur Shāh I, welcomed the help rendered by the Gurū in sending a detachment of Sikh horsemen in the battle of Jajau. Gurū Gobind Singh was awarded a jewelled scarf and presents worth Rs. 60,000. Bahādur Shāh turned towards Deccan to suppress the rebellion of his brother Kām Baksh Gurū Gobind Singh and his band also went south with the Emperor. However two young Pāthans, servants of the Gurū, assassinated him on 10th Sh'aban, 1222/7th October, 1807.

Gurū Gobind Singh was the tenth and final Gurū of the Sikhs Before his death he had commissioned one Lachman Dās—later known as Bandā Bairāgi--for urging Sikhs to volunteer for military service. A Kashmiri by origin, he had spent fifteen years or more of his life in a hermitage on the banks of Godavari. Bandā left Deccan and came northwards at the time Bahādur Shāh was still involved fighting his own brother in Deccan and Rajputs were in open revolt. "Banda opened the flood-gates to a sea of pent-up hatred, and all he could do was to ride on the crest of the wave of violence that he had let loose,[14]" writes Khushwant Singh. As Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar says, "He routed the commandant of Sonpat, and soon gathered 40,000 armed men around him, sacked the town of Sadhaura (twenty-six miles east of Ambala), killing many of the people and gained his crowning victory by defeating and slaying Vazīr Khān the commandant of Sirhind (22 May 1710), and plundered his entire camp. The town of Sirhind itself was taken and pillaged for four days with ruthless cruelty ; the mosques were defiled, the houses burnt, the women outraged and the Muslims slaughtered."[15] The crisis drew Bahādur Shāh to the Punjab. Before this, some imperial forces had fought Bandā and cleared the road from Sonpat to Sirhind. At the approach of the Emperor, Bandā

evacuated Sadhura and took post in the fort of Lohgarh and then fled to the hills of Jammu. On the death of Bahādur Shāh (26th Rabi ul-Awwal 1124/27th Feb. 1712), Bandā took advantage of the war of succession. He consolidated his power once again and started ravaging the northern Punjab plains. During the reign of Farrukh Siyar, Bandā Bahādur was forced to surrender after a bitter fighting and prolonged seige and executed at Delhi on 2nd Rabi II, 1128/15th March 1716. Bandā Bahādur's atrocities used to drive the population into wholesale flight from the raided territories. He was even considered as an imposter by asection of the Sikhs since he styled himself as the resurrected Gurū Gobind and introduced certain innovations into the Sikh creed and practice. During his short-lived success, however, he roused the Sikhs to take up arms for carving out a kingdom for themselves.

The ultimate aim of Sikhism was to reform Hinduism and there is hardly any doubt that Gurū Nānak had been deeply impressed by the teachings of Islam. The concept of *Tauhid*, the Oneness of God, equality of all human beings and rejection of idol worship were taken from Islam.[16]

Sikh religious writings, particularly *Adi Granth*, are full of *Sufi* metaphor.[17]

Sikhism was, undoubtedly, one of the most potent reformative movements born in India and it would have probably played a revolutionary role in reforming Hinduism if it had retained its original creed and not merged into the Hindu society. Had it developed a personality of its own, having faith in unalloyed unicity of God and equality of mankind, it would have been nearer to Islam, but the unfortunate confrontation with the then political powers, which are always insensitive to moral and spiritual consequences of the action taken by them, widened the gulf not only between the Sikhs and Muslim rulers but also with the Muslim masses. It made them a militant sect—one amongst serveral others destabilizing the country during the 12th A. H./ 18th century A. D. The wanton destruction of life and property by Bandā Bahādur and the humiliation suffered by Muslims in

their religious observances and the desecration of mosques and mausoleums[18] during the reign of Mahārāja Ranjīt Singh alienated the sympathies of Muslims who began to look upon the Khālsa as the enemies of Islam.

This was the situation obtaining in India when in the middle of thirteenth century A. H. (the beginning of nineteenth century A. D.) Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd (d. 1246/1830) and Ismāil Shahid (d. 1246/1830), both brought up by Shāh Waliullah's school of thought and both disciples of the Shāh's eldest son Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, had to unfurl the banner of *Jihād* against the military oligarchy of Maharāja Ranjīt Singh which really aimed at getting rid of the increasing foreign domination over India. Another objective of this *Jihād* movement was revivification of the Indian Muslim society.[19]

Jāts

Jāts were not a religious sect like the Sikhs but an ethnic group. Towards the downfall of Mughal empire the Jāt peasantry of the region around Bharatpur (west of Agra) got itself organised into a predatory power, hovering about with contending parties and plundering both sides whenever an opportunity was afforded for it. They never intended to form any stable administration, their chief aim being to fish in troubled waters and grab as much wealth as possible.

Prof. Khalīq Ahmad Nizāmi writes in his introduction to the *Shāh Waliullah Ke Siyāsi Maktūbāt* (political letters of Shāh Waliullah).

> "The region south of Jamuna from Agra to Delhi was populated by the Jāts and their eastern limit was the valley of Chanbal. Their depradations were a constant nuisance for the central government and, as Sarkar says, no administration could brook this thorn planted on the Delhi-Agra road. Elaborate precautions had to be taken in the movement of goods and troops on this road which led the way to Deccan via Ajmer.

"*Dastūr-al-Inshā* (by Yār Muhammad) shows how unsafe this pathway had become during the reign of Bahādur Shāh. The Dutch who passed through this region in 1712 have mentioned these conditions. John Surman who happened to travel on this road in June 1715, speaks of marauding activities of the Jāts. Earlier, during the reign of Shāh Jahān, the Jāts had raised a tumult when the commander of Mathura. Murshid Quli Khān, died fighting them in 1047/1637."[20]

Sir Jadu Nath Sirkar writes: "In 1685, these people raised their heads under two new leaders, Rāja Rām and Rām Chehra, the petty chiefs of Sinsani and Soghor, who were the first to train their clansmen in group organisation and open warfare............Then they began to raid the King's highway and carry their depredations even to the gates of Agra"[21]....... "Shortly afterwards, he (Rāja Rām) looted Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, doing great damage to the building and, according to one account digging out and burning that great emperor's bones."[22] "The next rising of the Jāts was under Churāman, a nephew of Rāja Rām. He robbed many a ministers of the (Mughal) court on the road and attacked the royal wardrobe and the revenues sent from the provinces."[23]

"A contemporary historian Har Charan Dās writes in the *Chahār Gulzār-i-Shujā'i* that when the Jāts started plundering old Delhi, the inhabitants of city were rendered homeless, who wandered aimlessly in all the directions like a broken ship tossed by angry waves of the ocean. Everybody appeared to have become a lunatic with shock and grief."[24]

Recounting the events of 1179/1765 Zakā Ullah writes in the *Tārikh Hindustān*:

"The Agra fort was commandeered by the Jāts who ruled over the territories 100 miles east to Delhi. Rājā

> Sūraj Mal had a genius for organisation and using opportunities. He drove away the Maratha commander of Agra and seized the territory of Mewat. He built four strong forts and started making such demands from Delhi that were sure to terminate the Delhi sultanate. Najīb-ud-daula defeated the Jāts with the help of Balauchs and Sūraj Mal was killed near Delhi. A war of succession broke out after the death of Sūraj Mal. Two of his sons were killed and the third, Ranjīt Singh, succeeded his father as the Rājā. The Jāts become very powerful during his reign, his state extending from south-east of Alwar to north-east of Agra. His annual revenues amounted to rupees two crores and his army consisted of sixty thousand troops."[25]

Conditions in Delhi

Plunder of Delhi, without any administration worthy of the name, had become a routine by the Maratha, Sikh and Jāt hordes. The city lay prostrate and bleeding and its citizens, who were respected not because they were the denizens of the capital but also because of their culture and learning, had become an easy prey for these plunderers. The letters written by the scholars and mystic *shaikhs* of the time (who were normally detached from all worldliness and endeavouring for spiritual perfection) to their friends and disciples reflect the disorder and uncertainty prevailing in Delhi in those days. Mirza Mazhar Jān-i-Jānān (1111-95/1699-1781) the well-known *Sheikh* of the Naqshbandiyah-Mujaddidyah order and a contemporary of Shāh Waliullah writes in one of his letters :

> "I am tired of the turmoils and unrest in Delhi occurring day after day."[26]

In another letter he says :

> "Disturbances bend their steps to Delhi from all sides."[27]

In yet another letter he speaks of the disorder prevailing in the capital and the agony of its inhabitants.

> "How can I describe the distress of the people caused by the prevalent affliction and chaos. God may save us from the divine wrath afflicting this city. There is no semblance of administration left in the government "[28]

Nādir Shāh's Sack of Delhi

Shāh Waliullah returned from Hijaz in 1145/1733. A few years later in 1151/1739, Nādir Shāh attacked Delhi which left the Mughal empire stupefied with the blow which had fallen on it. A great part of Delhi lay in ruins and the stench of the dead was intolerable after the sack of the city by Nādir Shāh. The gentry of the city was so dismayed that many of them decided to commit *jauhar*[29] after the custom of the Rajputs Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz says that on that occasion his father reminded the people of the tragic happenings of Karbala and the sufferings undergone by Husain, in order to dissuade them from committing suicide and killing their kith and kin. His advice was accepted by the people who refrained from committing that grievous sin.

Equanimity of Shāh Waliullah

Delhi was almost continuously being ravaged by the Marathas, Jāts, Sikhs and invaders like Nādir Shāh. Shāh Waliullah had often to leave Delhi during these tumults. In 1173/1760, the Shāh left Delhi with his family for Budhāna on the request of his attendants. As mentioned in the *Al Qaul-al-Jali*, he remained secluded for forty days during Ramadhān[30] and continued to teach and guide his disciples with complete peace of mind as if everything was normal not in Delhi alone but all over the country. He kept himself engaged in literary pursuits and religious reform unmindful of his surroundings. Syed Sulaimān Nadwi has hinted at serenity of the Shāh in his own inimitable style.

> "Extremely few writers have been there whose compositions are free from the influences exerted in their age, or transcend the time and space, or, at least, show no

concern to the intellectual torpor common among their compatriots. The Shah's writings, however, leave his times and circumstances in the shade and completely ignore personal reactions to the inconveniences faced by him. The reader never feels that he wrote them at a time when law and order had completely broken down in the country, chaotic conditions prevailed every where and Delhi, having lost its position as the centre of a great empire, was the scene of intrigues and conspiracy where every soldier of fortune was dreaming of establishing his own kingdom, Sikhs, Marathas, Jāts and Rohilas had become rebellions on the one hand, and adventurers like Nādir Shāh and Ahmad Shāh were invading the country every now and then. Delhi was sacked several times during this period, but the Shāh, who was a witness to all these happenings, never spoke of them nor there is any trace of any anxiety or sorrow, he would have naturally felt, in his writings. It seems as if he occupied some celestial sphere far away from terrestrial incidents and occurances. His compositions bear testimony to the patience and composure of a real man of learning: Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.[31]

Cultivation of knowledge in the true sense is but another form of the recollection of God. No wonder, therefore, if it produces serenity of mind and tranquillity in heart. Anyone going through thousands of pages written by the Shāh would hardly come across anything alluding to the tumultuous situation obtaining in the twelfth century when everything was disturbed by chaos and turmoil. He would feel immersed in a river of knowledge flowing placidly, undisturbed by the commotion around it produced by the march of events."[32]

Statesmanship of the Shāh

The Shāh role as a literati was, however, not confined merely to teaching and writing scholarly dissertations unperturbed by the anarchy and chaos closing in on him from all sides. He was quietly endeavouring to re-establish Muslim rule in the country, restore peace and order, suppress all contumacious forces and to streamline the administration in a way to enable Muslims to organise their social life in accordance with the *sharī'ah*. His efforts in this direction could be compared to that of any statesman who are normally unconcerned with intellectual pursuits.

Among those who have devoted their lives to the reform and revivification of Islam only Ibn Taimiyah can be compared with the Shāh who urged the Syrian Muslims in 700/1301 to stand up against the Mongols. When Sultān Muhammad b. Qalāwon of Egypt procrastinated in fighting the Mongols, causing discontent and frustration among the Syrians, he went to Egypt and exhorted him to take up arms for the defence of Syria. He even fought the Mongols along with the Sultān's troops and inflicted a humiliating defeat upon the Mongols[33]

The Shāh also showed a similar insight and gave proof of his statesmanship. Had the Mughals and their nobles possessed some courage and prudence, India would have got rid of its short-sighted and disruptive elements and even preserved its independence against the British, who entrenched themselves firmly during the nineteenth century owing to internal strife and absence of any central power, and subsequently became a world power by gaining control first over India and then the entire Arab and Muslim world.

The courage and ambition of the Shāh coupled with his composure and self-possession during the days when the conditions within the country were completely unsettled or rather explosive, reminds one of a couplet of Iqbāl in which he says:

> Stormy though the wind, he keeps his lamp alight
> The friar who has kingly miens.

Anxiety of the Shāh

The Shāh had seen, during his adolescence, the grandeur and majesty of Aurangzīb's rule. He would have also heard of pomp and splendour of the Mughal Empire from his elders. He was also aware of the glorious period of Islamic history for we find the duties and responsibilities of an Islamic state set forth by him in the *Izālat al-Khafa*, which, he believed, were necessary for divine succour. He was also a witness to the downfall of the Mughal Empire, the disorder prevailing during the times of Farrukh Siyar and Muhammad Shāh when no semblance of law and order was left and no security was there for any one's life and property. The Muslims were being humiliated and their religious practices were either ridiculed or interdicted. Although the Muslims had ruled over the country for the last six hundred years, they were feeling completely powerless at the moment. This dark and dreary situation made the Shāh shed tears of blood whose stains are found in the letters he wrote to his friends and grandees. We are giving here a few examples of it. One of it, written to some monarch[34] describes the discriminatory treatment against Islam by the Jāt chief Sūraj Mal.

> "Thereafter Sūraj Mal became powerful. The territory beyond two *Kos* from Delhi to Agra in length and from Mewāt to Fīrozābād and Shikohābād in breadth, is ruled by Sūraj Mal and nobody dares offer congregational prayer or give a call to prayer in this area."[35]

In the same letter he gives an account of the desolation of Bayānah which had earlier been a flourishing town and a well-known seat of learning.

> "The town of Bayānah an old cultural centre of Islam, inhabited by numerous scholars and mystics during the last seven hundred years was forcibly occupied and all the Muslims were driven away from it."[36]

The destitution of over a hundred thousand employees of the royal court is mentioned by him in another letter.

"When the royal treasury became empty, there was nothing

> to be paid to the employees. Scattered in different directions, these people had to fall back on beggary. Nothing was left except the empire in name only."[37]

About the condition of Indian Muslims, he wrote.

> "All in all, the condition of Muslims is simply pitiable."[38]

In a letter addressed to Nawāb Najīb-ud-daula, the Shāh wrote;

> "The Muslims of India whether they belong to Delhi or any other place, have had to face several afflictions and been ravaged many times. That the knife is now at the bones is a crying shame!"[39]

The condition then obtaining in India led the Shāh to predict about the future.

> "If the forces inimical to Islam are, God forbid, able to perpetuate their domination, the Muslims will consign Islam to oblivion and it would not be long when they will be turned into a people incapable of distinguishing Islam from un-Islam."[40]

Advice to Mughal Kings and Grandees

Shāh Waliullah had assiduously studied the causes of the rise and downfall of Mughal empire (which have been discussed in connexion with the *Hujjat Allāh-al-Bāligha* in the seventh chapter). He had applied his mind to the history of other Muslim kingdoms and derived conclusions in regard to philosophy of history. He was helped in the task by his thorough knowledge of the Qurān and the 'way' of God repeatedly referred to in it. He had reached the conclusion that the Mughal's hereditary form of succession to the empire extending over a long period of time, excessive fun and frolic indulged in by the rulers, self-centered courtiers and short-sighted advisers had made the empire weak and infirm. He agreed with the well-known verdict of the Arab philosopher-historian Ibn Khaldūn that when any state enters in its declining years, it is (generally) not possible for it to regain its vigour again.

But a well-meaning concern and a sincere longing for

common weal makes one try his luck even in conditions when there is hardly any hope of success. Nevertheless, there was no reason to lose one's heart. A family which had ruled over the country for several hundred years could be expected to produce a man of courage and ambition who was able to turn the tide and give a new life to the dying empire. The Shāh had studied the Qur'ān in depth and he had this verse of the scripture in his view :

> Thou causest the night to pass into the day, and Thou causest the day to pass into the night. And Thou bringest forth the living from the dead, and Thou bringest forth the dead from the living. And Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou choosest without stint.[41]

The Shāh very well knew the state of affairs in the Red Fort, still he considered it his duty to write a letter to then Mughal King in which he advised the latter to reform the system of government for imparting it a renewed strength. His letter shows his insight into history and polity besides his deep knowledge of religious sciences. In the very beginning of his letter he makes an appeal to the King :

> "I hope from the grace of God that if you act on my advice, the affairs of the state would be set right and it would be able to preserve itself and enhance its prestige As a poet says :
>
> I am like a parrot behind a looking glass,
> I utter only what the Ever-Abiding tells me to say."[42]

This letter which was addressed jointly to the King, his ministers and courtiers, contained some valuable suggestions in regard to political and administrative measures for the welfare of the people and regaining their confidence. The Shāh had thereafter advised that only such persons should be appointed Qazis and *Muhtasibs* (Censors of public morals) whose conduct had been beyond reproach and they should belong to the *ahl-sunnah* school. He also suggested that the *imāms* of the mosques should be handsomely paid, all should be required to join the congrega-

tional prayers and the sanctity of *Ramadhān* should not be violated. He also wrote that the King and his grandees should give up their bouts of pleasure, should repent on their past sins and avoid them in future. He concluded the letter with the words that if his suggestions were acted upon, they would be succoured by God.[43]

The Shāh had thus absolved himself of the duty of sounding the alarm about the impending danger hovering over the ruling circles and the people alike. This was what he was required to do as a religious leader, a commentator of the Qur'ān and *hadīth* and a renovator of his time. The Shāh. like his predecessors, never accepted any favour from any king and led a simple and frugal life. Yet, like Khwāja Nizām-ud-dīn Aulia and Syed Nasīr-ud-dīn Chirāgh Dehli he was always solicitous of the well being of the kingdom and never weary of advising or writing letters to those among the ruling circle who came into contact with him. Sometimes the King paid a visit to the Shāh and requested him to pray for his welfare. In one of his letters to Shāh Muhammad 'Ashiq of Phulat who was his cousin as well as a disciple, the Shāh wrote :

> "The King[44] went to pay a visit to the shrine of Hazrat Nizām-ud-din Aulia and other saints on Thursday. He came to see me, without any previous intimation, from the side of the Kābuli Darwāza, and came to the mosque where I was present at the time. Honour of the King being incumbent on me, I left one side of my prayer-mat for the King. He sat on one side of it while I was on the other side. He shook hands with me and said that he wanted to see me for a long time. Pointing to a young man, he said that he had led him to me. Then calling attention of his minister he said that the dominance of the disbelievers and discord among the people had reached the stage that he found no pleasure in eating or drinking or enjoying a sound sleep. He asked me to pray for him. I replied that I had already been

praying for him and would now, God-willing, do it even more.

"In the meantime the minister told me that the King was very particular about the five daily prayers. I thanked God and said that it was something I have heard after a long time since his predecessors were not reported to be punctual in prayers."[45]

The Shāh told the King about the advice tendered by Caliph Abu Bakr to Caliph 'Umar at the time he nominated 'Umar as his successor.

"The Caliph is often confronted with perplexing difficulties, both from the side of the enemies as well as from the friends. There is only one solution to all these problems and that is to take the command of God as one's criterion and seek His help to the exclusion of everything else."[46]

In another letter to Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq, the Shāh wrote :

"The King[47] and his mother came to see me. Arrangement was made for the privacy of the lady within the mosque. The King's intention was to spend some time with me. He remained there for three or four hours, took the meal with me and mostly talked about the ways of eliciting people's cooperation for public weal."[48]

This was, however, the time when the over-extended decay of the hereditary kingship, external threats and internal intrigues had so enfeebled the Mughal empire that even a dauntless and resolute man would have found it extremely difficult to bring the decadence to a hault by infusing a new life in the administration. History is a witness to the fact that internal machinations, particularly at a time when degeneration of any kingdom has percolated to its depth, render the efforts of the most resolute potentate fruitless. It has happened several times that the last king of any dynasty was a better man than his predecessors. He often made prodigious efforts to save the kingdom but failed.

Marwān Ibn Muhammad known as Marwān al-Himar (d.132/750) of the Umayyed dynasty, Must'asim Billah (d.656/1258) the last Caliph of the 'Abbāsids and, to an extent, the last Mughal Emperor Bahādur Shāh Zafar (d. 1279/1862) are but a few examples of such monarchs.

It was, therefore, necessary for a farsighted and sagacious man like Shāh Waliullah not to limit his endeavours to contact only the king and his courtiers for fighting the disruptive forces and arousing the consciousness of local population, but also to get in touch with other nobles and military leaders outside Delhi who possessed the courage and ambition to change the existing state of affairs. Some of those whom the Shāh approached for the purpose were the prime minister Āsaf Jāh,[49] Nawāb Fīroz Jang Nizām ul-mulk Ahmad Shāhi,[50] 'Imād-ul-Mulk Tāj Muhammad Khan Biloch, Nawāb Mujd-ud-daula Bahādur,[51] Nawab 'Ubaid Ullah Khān Kāshmīri, Miān Niāz Gul Khān and Syed Ahmad Rohila. But the two who were specially chosen for the task by Shāh Waliullah were Amir-ul-Umara Nawāb Najīb-ud-daula within India, and Ahmad Shāh Abdāli, the King of Afghanistan, outside the country.

Nawab Najib-ud-daula

Nawāb Najīb-ud daula[52] possessed all those qualities of head and heart which were required of the founders of kingdoms in the past when the courage and valour of any individual was enough to win the allegiance of the people. Najīb-ud daula was trustworthy and loyal to the Mughal rulers, kind and gracious to his subordinates and a brave and talented military leader. These qualities could have helped him to defeat his foes in the battle-field but unfortunately they were of little benefit to him in the prevailing atmosphere of court intrigues and machinations. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar expresses wonder at his sterling qualities as a capable general in the battlefield who formed a correct estimate in the case of difficulties and was able to take a correct decision in a confusing situation.[53] Another historian Zakā Ullah writes in the *Tārīkh-i-Hindustān* :

"Few nobles could be compared to Najīb-ud daula in the wisdom and sagacity he possessed. He was the last word in trustworthiness and fidelity. He always remained faithful to his old masters Dūnde Khān Rohila and Nawāb Shuj'a-ud-daula. He also maintained good relations with Malhar Rāo Holkar who had fled from the battle of Panipat. In short, he was the man responsible for preserving what had been left of that disintegrating empire.[54]"

Shāh Abdul 'Azīz, the son of Shāh Waliullah writes in his *Malfūzāt* that "Najīb-ud-daula supported nine hundred scholars, of whom the lowest in rank got rupees five and the highest rupees five hundred."[55]

Prof. Khalīq Ahmad Nizāmi considers Najīb-ud-daula as the "most important personality between 1761 to 1770 when the politics of Delhi revolved around him and he shouldered the responsibility of the entire administration."[56]

As a realist and a great judge of human character, the Shāh had the knack to select the right person for every job. This is a quality endowed to all those reformers and revolutionaries who are destined to renovate and revivify the society. In those days of decay when there was no dearth of adventurers, the Shāh selected Najīb-ud-daula, for he saw the spirit and warmth for religion in the latter. The Shāh started writing letters to him in order to arouse his dormant passion for the defence of his faith. In one of his letters to Najīb-ud-daula, the Shāh wrote :

"The Lord of Glory may bless the leader of those who are fighting for religion with a conspicuous victory and discernible Divine succour, and make it a means for showering His choicest rewards and bounties.

"Let it be known after greetings that prayers are being offered here for the victory of the Muslims and there seem to be indications that these supplications have been heard. It is hoped that God will renew *jihād* through you and bestow His favours on you in this world and the world to come."[57]

In another letter Najīb-ud-daula is addressed by the Shāh as 'Commander of the fighters for God."[58]

In yet another letter to him the Shāh wrote:

> "It seems that the task of helping the *millat* in these times will be accomplished through you which is the mainspring of all the meritorious acts. You should not allow any suspicion or doubt to make its way into your heart. God willing, everything will be achieved as desired by your well-wishers."[59]

The Shāh did not merely convey his good-wishes to Najīb-ud-daula in his letters, he often made useful suggestions or invited his attention towards mistakes committed by earlier Muslims so that these were not repeated since, in his view, such mistakes withheld the succour of God. In one of his letters to him, he wrote:

> "When the imperial army passes through Delhi, care should be taken to ensure that the city should not be ravaged as it has happened on previous occasions. The citizens of Delhi have several times undergone the humiliation of plundering and degradation. This was the reason for their failure for the lament of the wronged is also efficacious. If you want to succeed on this occasion and accomplish the tasks remaining incomplete, then you have to give strict orders and ensure their compliance that no soldier interferes with the Muslims of Delhi or the non-Muslims who enjoy the status of *zimmīs* (protected citizens)."[60]

In his several letters to Najīb-ud-daula, the Shāh drew his attention to the disruptive forces (mentioned in the beginning of this chapter) whose suppression was necessary for bringing normalcy and protection of Muslims and their religious institutions. He repeatedly told Najīb ud-daula about the causes creating insurrectionary conditions in the country.[61]

The Shāh had, it seems, pinned all his hopes in Najīb-ud-daula for he insisted that he should always inform him before taking to field of battle so that he might engage himself in prayers

for his victory.[62] The Shāh also emboldened Najīb-ud-daula of his victory in several letters. In one of these he wrote: "This mendicant has absolutely no doubt about it."[63]

The Shāh urged Najīb-ud-daula to write letters to Ahmad Shāh Abdāli in addition to his own epistles to him for coming to the rescue of Indian Muslims. Najib-ud-daula died eight years after the death of Shāh Waliullah in Rajab 1184 A. H. /31 October, 1770. How deeply Najīb-ud-daula was influenced by the Shāh is evident from an incident narrated by Prof. Khalīq Ahmad Nizāmi who writes:

> "An incident showing his wisdom and justice will always illuminate the pages of history. When he was breathing his last, he instructed his troops (at Hapur where he was at the time and a Hindu fair was being held) that Hindu pilgrims visiting the Ganges fair should be provided complete protection."[64]

Ahmad Shāh Abdāli

A judicious appraisal of the chaotic conditions produced in the country by the incompetence of the later Mughal kings and depravity of their nobles and courtiers had convinced the Shāh that the primary need of the hour was to do away with the disruptive and refractory forces in the country since these had made insecure the life and property of almost every citizen and left no room for any reform or constructive work to salvage the situation. The three rebellious forces, as stated above, had neither any experience of running an orderly form of government in a country with a pluralistic society nor possessed the qualities like forbearance, large-heartedness, sense of resposibility etc. These forces were also not interested in bringing about stability and tranquillity in the country, nor they wanted to win the confidence of all sections of Indian population. The Shāh had, therefore, reached the conclusion that it was imperative to save the country from the domination of these indisciplined elements, particularly the Marathas, who had turned the most sensitive part of country, the territory from Lahore to Oudh, into a virtual battle-ground.

Sikhs and Jāts were also predatory powers, next only to the Marathas, who were interested only in plundering the flourishing cities and other urban centres.

Another conclusion arrived at by the Shāh was that the danger of lawlessness facing the country could be combated by an experienced military leader having a sufficient and disciplined force at his command. Such a commander was to be brave and an accomplished fighter, but not arrogant and autocratic. He had to be God-fearing and to keep himself above the politics of intrigue and court conspiracies which had undermined the Mughal empire. The man, in the Shah's view, had to have an objective higher than seeking dominance of any particular racial or regional group or even establishing his own hegemony. In short, the Shāh, wanted a man who could restore law and order in the country as well as re-establish the lost position of Islam in it. He considered Nawāb Najīb-ud-daula suitable for achieving these ends, but he was conscious of the fact that the Nawāb did not possess enough power and resources to defeat the rebellious forces by himself since some of these had strengthened their military power to a degree that no single power then existing in India could crush them. Hence a new military commander from abroad was needed, but he had to know the country and its people, their beliefs and culture, the political situation and the characteristics and weaknesses of the contending forces in India trying to overrun the country. The Shāh wanted a magnanimous soul not interested in establishing his own rule over the country but one who was prepared to save India from its impending dangers and leave the governance of the country to some capable Mughal prince or a competent Indian noble or minister. This was not only a realistic solution in the given circumstances but was also demanded by patriotism as well as the desire for welfare of the Muslim community in India.

It was a delicate and difficult task involving great risks which are natural to such ventures. The Shāh's choice fell on Ahmad Shāh (1136-1186/1723-1772) of Sadozai branch of the Abdāli or Durrāni tribe, an Afghān chief who had first estab-

lished himself in Herāt, captured Qandahār and then reduced to obedience the whole of Afghanistan. He was not an stranger to India. He had been born in Multan[65] where a road is still named after him. Between 1747 and 1769 he had attacked India nine times and visited India six times before he was invited by Shāh Waliullah and Najīb-ud-daula when he fought the battle of Pānīpat. He was aware of the political conditions of India, its nobles and ruling circles and its military powers and their strategy. He was a born leader of men and had the qualities required of the founders of empires. He had consolidated the unruly Afghans and welded them into a nation, established law and order, promulgated laws to achieve the ends of justice and appointed censors of public morals. He was brave and upright in his personal character, commanded the respect of his people, and was fond of spending his time with the scholars. He respected the saintly persons and religious scholars and was always inclined to increase his knowledge. Kind and considerate by nature, he tolerated religious differences and wanted to be just to all. A learned man inclined to the path of spirit[66] he had introduced certain reforms in Afghanistan. One of these was the re-marriage of widows. In regard to the character of Ahmad Shāh, Fryer writes in the *History of Afghanistan* that Ahmad Shāh was untouched by numerous eastern vices : he kept himself away from wine and opium; was neither greedy nor hypocrite : strictly followed religious precepts ; and his simple yet sober habits had endeared him among the people. He was always available to the common people and was very particular about restoring justice to all. Nobody ever complained about the judgement delivered by him.[67]

Ahmad Shāh had invaded India six times for different reasons which had left no more impression than to be feared as a potential invader of India. His troops had often indulged in excesses not expected of an army fighting for the cause of Islam. Some of his invasions had even caused worry to the Shāh or those nearer to him, yet he appeared to be the only ray of hope in the then welter of conflicts, plunderings and anarchy. Shaikh

Muhammad Āshiq of Phulat is on record that the Shāh firmly held the view that Ahmad Shāh Abdāli would one day capture the country. Once, in reply to a question asked by Bahādur Khān Biloch, the Shāh had replied, "He would subdue this country". Another time a rumour about the death of Ahmād Shāh Abdāli gained currency. When Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq enquired the Shāh about it he replied :

> " It appears that Ahmad Shāh Durrāni would come to this country again and crush the infidels here. This is why he has been kept alive by God despite his oppressions."[68]

The Shāh hoped that God will help Abdāli to take to the right path and enable him to accomplish the task which was apparently beyond the competence of any ruler or military leader within India. Once he told Hakim Abul Wafā Kashmiri that the difficulties faced by Abdāli were due to the high-handedness he had permitted during his past incursions on Indian towns. The Shāh hoped that he would take the right path later on.[69]

The Shāh wanted Abdāli to extricate the country from its chaotic conditions and then handover the administration to some capable person of India's ruling family. The Shāh had even predicted that Abdāli would not come to India to stay here but would go back after nominating one of the Mughal princes as the Emperor of the country.[70]

Shāh Waliullah got Najīb-ud-daula to write letters to Ahmad Shāh Abdāli and then addressed him a persuasive letter which reflects his political insight, courage and zeal for religion besides his command over Persian language.[71] In this letter he described the then condition of the country, the old and inefficient way of its administration, the situation in various provinces and the different racial and religious communities, the power wielded by them, the short-sighted policies followed by earlier rulers in regard to them and gradual acquisition of power and prestige by some regional forces. He specifically gave an account of Marathas and Jāts, their frequent plundering raids and the humiliations to which Muslims were made to undergo by them.

Abdāli was urged by the Shāh to intervene in the matter and revive the decaying Mughal empire, since, as the Shāh pleaded, it was a duty incumbent on him by virtue of his being the foremost military power of the day in the region extending from India to Iran. The Shāh wrote in his letter:

> "There is no other king besides you who in these times, has the power, foresight and military skill necessary to defeat the enemies.[72]"

He continued further:

> "We, the bondsmen of God, take the Apostle of God on whom be blessings and peace as our intercessor and appeal to you in the name of God that you should fight the enemies of God so that you may be blessed with a great merit, your name may appear in list of fighters for the cause of God, you may be rewarded in this world and Muslims may be rescued from the oppressions of the infidels."[73]

The Shāh's political insight and deep knowledge of the nascent insurrectionary powers, some of which were then regarded as too powerful or indefeatable, had enabled him to make an extremely correct estimate of them. About the Marathas, he wrote:

> "It is easy to overthrow the Marathas provided the Muslims make up their mind to do so. In fact, the Marathas are themselves small in numbers, but numerous other groups have joined hands with them. If any one of these groups or a section of these is beaten, they will part company and render the leading faction powerless. Since these people are not bold, they rely on marshalling a vast army out-numbering even the ants and locusts. They do not possess either sufficient valour or armaments."[74]

The letters sent to Ahmad Shāh Abdāli by Najīb-ud-daula and the Shāh did not prove fruitless. In 1173/1759, Ahmad Shāh Abdāli once more bent his steps towards India determined to break the power of Marathas, and help Najīb-ud-daula and

Shuja-ud-daula, who had united for the protection of Muslims. One year was spent in skirmishes on his way to the Indian capital. At last the decisive battle of Pānīpat was fought on 7 Jamādi-ul-Ākhir 1174/14 January 1761 between the Marathas on the one side, and Afghans and their Muslim partisans, on the other, which finally eliminated the Marathas from the newly emerging political map of India. Zakā Ullah, the author of *Tārīkh Hindustān*, has given a brief description of this fateful battle in these words:

> "The engagement raged with the utmost fury, but the battle seemed to be going in favour of the Marathas. Ahmad Shāh got an announcement made that the stragglers dribbling away to the rear would be put to death. At, the same time, he brought up his fresh reserves to attack the enemy flank to his left. Bhāo Sahib and Vishwas Rāo were directing their forces in the centre, but with dramatic suddenness, resistance of the Marathas collapsed. They turned their backs and fled at full speed, leaving the field of battle covered with heaps of the dead. The victors pursued them as much as 15 or 20 miles making heaps of their dead bodies. The fugitives who were able to evade their pursuers were killed by the villagers. Jānkoji Sindhia had taken refuge with a Durrāni Afghan but was found out and put to sword. Ibrāhīm Khān Gārdi was taken prisoner and sacrificed to the enmy's rage after a week. Samsher Bahadūr fled but he was killed by his pursuers. Malhar Rāo escaped to Malwa where he was joined by Apaji Sindhia; the latter after receiving a wound in the leg. These were the two prominent Marathas who could save themselves, for all others had perished in the Pānīpat inferno. Never was there a calamity that had diffused so much depression in the Marathas. Bālāji in failing health after the disaster, devoted his time to the teaching of Sanskrit in his temple, and died

after a short while."[75]

Never was a defeat more complete, says Elphinstone. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar says that there was not a house in Maharashtra which had nobody to mourn for and the entire leadership of Marathas was wiped out in one encounter.[76]

As desired by the Shāh, Ahmad Shāh having accompalished the job retreated to Qandahār and did not invade India again. Zakā Ullah says:

> "After the great victory Ahmad Shāh Abdāli came to Delhi from Pānīpat. A few days thereafter, he nominated Prince 'Ali Guhar as Emperor with the title of Shāh 'Ālam, and recommended him to appoint Shujā-ud-daula as his minister and Najīb-ud-daula as Amīr-ul-Umrā. As Shāh 'Ālam was not at Delhi at the moment, he got Shāh 'Ālam's son Javān Bakhat to deputise for his father and appointed Najīb-ud-daula as the regent and administrator of Delhi. He granted a robe of honour to Shujā'-ud-daula before despatching him to take over as the governor of Oudh and Allahabad. Thereafter he left for Qandāhār."[77]

Prof. Khalīq Ahmad Nizāmi gives some more details of the happenings on this occasion.

> "Ahmad Shāh Abdāli tried his best, after the battle of Pānīpat, to recall Shāh 'Ālam to Delhi. He sent his own courier, but when Shāh 'Ālam did not respond to his summons, Abdāli got a letter sent by Shāh 'Ālam's mother Nawāb Zeenat Begum imploring him to shake off the tutelage of the Englishmen and re-establish his power at Delhi in the presence of Ahmad Shāh Abdāli."[78]

Prof. Nizāmī also says:

> "Neither the Maratha nor Jat, nor yet Sikh stirrings were broad-based and catholic enough to think of maintaining the unity and integrity of the country. The Shāh wanted, under the new set up conceived by him, to restore the central power of the days of Akbar.

Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Aurangzib and the sovereignty of the empire based on justice but not ruled by autocratic kings.........Had any spark of life been left in the empire, it would have easily taken advantage of the Pānīpat encounter and re-established its authority over India for a few centuries to come. But the Mughal empire was, in fact, like a lifeless body and the benefit accruing from the battle of Pānīpat was availed of by the victors of Plassey."[79]

Shāh 'Ālam lost this opportunity owing to his lack of courage and prudence, despite the insistance of his mother Zeenat Mahal, and came back to the Red Fort after ten years on 17 Ramazan, 1185/25 December 1771. The tragic fate that awaited him and his successors, culminated in the great uprising of 1857 which brought the Mughal empire formally to an end and transferred the administration of the country to the rising British power. These happenings need not be recounted here.

Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz, the son of Shāh Waliullah continued the reformatory work started by the Shāh, but directed his political endeavours against the British rulers who had, by his time, became the greatest danger to the sovereignty and independence of the country.

After Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz, two of his disciples Saiyid Ahmad Shahid and Shāh Ismāil Shahīd, tried to translate the teachings of the Shāh contained in the *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* and *Izālat al-Khafa* into practice and sacrificed their lives for establishing a truly Islamic state on the pattern of right-guided caliphate. How much were they influenced by the thought of Shāh Wali-Ullah what were their aspirations, how farsighted and large-hearted were they, what efforts they made to save the Muslims from tyrannical oligarchy of the Sikhs in the Punjab (as Shāh had tried to protect the society in his own time from the interminable depredations of the Marathas and Jāts) and what type of government they wanted to establish by overthrowing the alien rule of the Englishmen can be seen from the letters they wrote to the then rulers, grandees and prominent Muslims.[80]

Notes and References

1. A few years before the birth of Shāh Waliullah.
2. Vincent A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India*, Delhi, 1985, p. 499.
3. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, pp. 414-15.
4. Suraj Mal earnestly advised Bhāo to start guerilla operations in the traditional Maratha fashion but Bhāo contemptuously rejected the advice as those of "the chatter of goatbeards and Zamindars." The taunt deeply wounded the pride of the Jat who left saying, "If the Brahmin wins he will send his couriers to collect the revenues of Hindustan, and we shall have to wash his loin-cloths.""
5. Shivaji first levied *chauth* or one-fourth of the agricultural produce in the conquered territories as a guarantee for not attacking the territory again or for defence of the people against aggression by another power. He charged 30 per cent from the farmers within Maharashtra which was later increased to 40 per cent.
6. Mountstuart Elphinstone, *The History of India*, London, 1866, p. 620.
7. A foreign country.
8. Zakā Ullah, *Tarīkh-i-Hind*, Delhi, 1897, Vol. IX, p. 305.
9. There is ample evidence to show that Bābā Nānak kept company with several Muslim mystics, the most prominent among whom was Shaikh Farīd of Pāk Patan, whose 142 stanzas were included into the *Adi Granth*. Other Muslim mystics intimate with Bābā Nānak were Pīr Jalāl, Miān Mittha, Shāh Sharaf-ud-din, Pīr 'Abdur Rahmān and Shāh Ibrāhīm. Bābā Nānak is also reported to have visited Baghdād and the two holy cities of Makkah and Medina.
10. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Delhi, 1986, Vol. I. pp. 53-54.
11. Gurū Arjun was, in fact, sentenced to death on the advice of a Hindu banker Chandu Shāh whose daughter's hand Arjun had refused to accept for his son. On the other hand, the Muslim divine Miān Mīr tried in vain to intercede on behalf of Gurū Arjun. (*A History of Sikhs*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 60-61).
12. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Delhi 1986, Vol. I, p. 73.
13. Gurmit Singh, *Guru Nanak's Relations with the Lodis and Mughals*, Delhi, 1987, p. 156.
14. *History of the Sikhs*, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

15. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 322.
16. Thomas Patrick Huges, *Dictionary of Islam*, Art : Sikhism (Delhi, 1978) and Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs* (Delhi, 1986) Vol. I, p. 17.
17. *Ibid.*
18. For details see '*Rise of the Sikhs*' in Mohiuddin Ahmad's *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd-His life and Mission*, Lucknow, p. 197.
19. For details see *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd-His Life and Mission* by Mohiuddin Ahmad, Lucknow, p. 19.
20. Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizām, *Shāh Waliullah ke Siyāsi Maktubat*, Delhi, 1969, p. 175.
21. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 305.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Shāh Waliullah Ke Siyāsi Maktūbāt*, p. 175.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
25. Summarised from *Tārīkh Hindustān*, *op. cit.*, Vol. IX, pp. 316-18,
26. *Kalemāt-i-Tayyabāt*, letter no. 40.
27. *Ibid.*, letter no. 54.
28. *Ibid.*, letter no. 86.
29. The custom of Rajput nobility to kill their women and children and jump into the raging fire, in the case of suffering a defeat at the hands of an inveterate enemy.
30. *Al-Qaul al-Jali*, MSS.
31. Q. 13 : 26.
32. *Al-Furqan*, Shāh Waliullah Number, Vol. 7, No. 9-12, Ramadhan—Dhil Hijja, 1359, pp. 322-23.
33. For details see Vol. II of the *Saviours of Islamic Spirit* by the author.
34. It is believed that the letter was written to Ahmad Shāh Abdāli.
35. Khaliq Ahmad Nizāmi, *Shāh Waliullah ke Siyāsi Maktūbāt* (Delhi, 1969), p. 15.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 22-23.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
41. Q. 3 : 27.
42. Unfortunately the name of the Emperor to whom this letter was addressed is not known.
43. *Shāh Waliullah ke Siyāsī Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.
44 The Shāh has not mentioned the name of the King, nor it is possible to ascertain it now.
45. *Shāh Waliullah ke Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, p. 135-36.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.
47. The reference is to Ahmad Shāh Bahādur son of Muhammad Shāh who ascended the throne in 1161/1720.
48. *Siyāsi Maktūbāt*, op. cit., p. 111.
49. Collection of the letters of Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm and Shāh Waliullah (Osmania University MSS), p. 214.
50. *Ibid.*
51. Four letters to him are given in the *Shāh Waliullah ke Siyāsi Maktūbāt* (pp. 66-70).
52. For details see Nasīr-ud-din's *Najīb-ut-Tawārīkh*, MSS Habib Ganj Library and *Shāh Waliullah Ke Siyāsi Maktūbāt*, pp. 231-34.
53. See Sarkar, J. N., *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. II, p. 416.
54. *Tārikh Hindustān*, op. cit., Vol, IX, p. 315.
55. Shah 'Abdul Aziz, *Malfūzāt*, Mathura, 1314 A. H., p. 81.
56. *Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, p. 232.
57 *Siyasi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, p. 19.
58, *Ibid.*, p. 20.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 21,
61, *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.
62. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26.
64. *Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, p. 234 on the authority of Sir J. N Sirkar.
65. See Collin Davies article on Ahmad Shāh Durrāni in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam.*
66, See *Ahmad Shah Durrani-Father of Modern Afghanistan* by Dr. Ganda Singh, Asia Publishing House, 1949,

67. Cited from the *Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, pp. 225-26.

68. *Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

70. *Ibid*,

71. This letter can be seen on pp. 6-17 of the *Siyāsi Maktūbāt.*

72. *Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, p. 12.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

75. Zakā Ullah, *Tarikh Hindustān, op. cit.*, Vol. IX, p. 309.

76. *Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op, cit.*, p. 45.

77. *Tarikh Hindustān, op. cit.*, Vol. IX, pp. 309-10.

78. *Siyāsi Maktūbāt, op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

79. *Ibid., op. cit.*, pp. 45 and 47.

80. For details see *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid—His Life and Mission*, Lucknow, 1975 by Mohiuddin Ahmad and *Seerat Saiyid Ahmad Shaheed*, Vol. I, by the author.

X

Reformatory Endeavours
A Distinctive Feature of the Shah

It is a common experience that those having an intellectual and literary bent of mind and endowed with a penetrating intellect and discernment in academic matters usually limit their activities to studies, academic discussions, exploration of intellectual issues, teaching and writing either because they are completely disinterested in the social and political conditions of the country or because of their inability to descend from their intellectual heights to the level of mundane affairs and problems faced by the commonality. Among the scholars of the past, we find only two exceptions. One of these was Abu Hāmid al-Ghazzāli (d. 505/1111) whose *magnum opus*, the *Ihyā Uloom id-Dīn* is a critique of the different sections of Muslim society of his time. His work shows his acquaintance with modes and morals of the common people to the same extent as he was aware of the comportment of scholars, mystics, rulers and nobles, merchants and craftsmen. His work shows an awareness of the deceptions of self and devilish instincts of the different classes of peoples which lead them astray from the right path, transmute the spiritual ends and realities and create an attitude of callousness towards the supreme objective of winning the pleasure of God.[1]

The same is true of the *Talbīs-o-Iblīs* of Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1201) in which the vices found among different sections of the people have been dealt with showing the incisiveness of the author's intellectual grasp. The author has, in this work, taken stock of every class and group of the Muslims from the stand-point of *sharī'ah.* His critique does not spare either the scholars of *fiqh* and *hadīth,* the literati, poets, administrators and the rulers, mystics or the people engaged in other walks of life and exposes their faults and self-delusions.[2] However, Ibn al-Jawzi is at places too severe in his criticisms in the *Talbīs-o-Iblīs,* which, being negative in character and unaccompanied by positive suggestions for reform and improvement, lose their effectiveness. The reason perhaps is that the theme selected for the work did not allow him to deal with the remedial measures.

A Word to each Section of Muslims

In comparison to the reformative endeavours of these two great scholars, the efforts made by Shāh Waliullah appear to be more comprehensive and instructive. He has separately addressed the Muslim rulers, nobles, courtiers, men-at-arms, traders and craftsmen, descendants of the saints, impious scholars and sermonizers and those saintly men who had withdrawn from the world and diagnosed their fallacies and errors. He also admonishes the Muslim community as a whole, indicates their faults and failings and suggests the measures necessary for regaining their lost vigour. These writings of the Shāh reflect his zeal for religion in a diction so vigorous and effective as it would be difficult to find even in the compositions of the two reformers mentioned earlier. We are presenting here a few extracts from the first two volumes of the *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiya*[3] in which the Shāh speaks to the influential and leading classes of his time. These passages reflect the Shāh's awareness of the contemporary affairs, his insight and moral courage :

To the Muslim Rulers

"O kings, the celestial sphere demands that you should

unsheath your swords and do not put them back in the scabbards until Islam is separated from polytheism and the headstrong leaders of blasphamy and wickedness do not consider themselves weak and powerless, and they abandon the path of rebellion forever. *And fight them until persecution is no more and religion is all for Allah.*[4] When the difference between the *kufr* (infidelity) and Islam becomes marked and clear, then you ought to appoint commanders at a distance of three or four days' journey. The men to be appointed should be upright and just and strong who may be able to restore justice to the weak and oppressed, enforce the divine commandments and, at the same time, are vigilant enough to curb any rebellion in future. They should not allow the contumacious elements to regroup themselves again for waging war, nor to apostatize, nor yet to commit any major sin. Islam's teachings should be preached openly and everybody should perform the prescribed observances faultlessly. The administrator of each city ought to have adequate power at his command to mend the ways of the people under him.

"At the same time, nobody should be allowed to become powerful enough to have designs for personal benefit and challenge the authority of the government.

"It is necessary for larger regions within the dominion that such governors should be appointed who have the experience of conducting warfare. Such governors should be allowed to have an army consisting of twelve thousand combatants, but only those should be recruited who possess the zeal to fight for the cause of God, be not scared of being ridiculed for it, be willing to fight every person recalcitrant and stiff-necked and be also capable of it.———O kings, the Divine will shall require you, after you have accomplished these tasks, to divert your attention to the social and family life of the people, to redress their mutual differences and to make such arrangements that no dispute arises that contravenes the *sharī'ah*. Only then can people enjoy peace and amity."[5]

To the Nobles and Grandees

"Noblemen ! Do you have no fear of God that you are getting mesmerised by the pleasures of the finite world ? You have abandoned the people placed under your charge, so that some may destroy the other. Do you not indulge in drinking blatantly and are not even ashamed of it ? Do you not see the mansions built by some where fornication is committed, wine is drunk and gambling is the pastime ? But you neither intervene nor do anything to stop these vices. What about those major towns where the criminal law of Islam has not been enforced for the last six hundred years ? When you find a weak offender, you apprehend him, but the powerful one you leave alone. All of your brains are devoted to have the most delicious victuals and to enjoy the fair and lovely women—nothing catches your attention save the expensive clothes and large buildings. Have you ever bowed down to God ? You speak of God only in your table-talks and prattle. It seems that in your parlance God simply means the march of time since you often say that God is potent to do this or that—the change brought by time seems to signify God for you."[6]

To the Armymen.

"Soldiers and Fighters ! God had equipped you to fight for His cause. The intention was that the will of God would prevail, He would be rendered homage and you would root out all the vestiges of polytheism. But you have forsaken what you had been created for. Now the purpose of your keeping the horses and collecting arms is simply to amass wealth ; you are always forgetful of *Jihad*, sip wine, drain cups of hemp, shave your beards and keep moustaches; you harass the people and never give what is due for the goods received by you from others. By God you shall shortly be returned unto God and then He shall let you know what you have been doing. What God wants of you is that you should adopt the dress and manners of pious fighters for the cause of God, keep the beards and trim the moustaches offer the five daily prayers, never swindle the

goods of the people and remain firm in the field of battle. You ought to learn the concessions allowed in offering prayers while travelling or fighting, such as, reduction in the number of obligatory prayers to be offered, offering of different prayers at a time, foregoing *sunnat* prayers on such occasions, ritual ablution with sand and then offer the prayers regularly. You ought to be upright even in your intentions for it is then that God will bless you with prestige and honour and make you overcome your enemies."[7]

To the Artisans and Craftsmen

'Artisans and Craftsmen ! You lack the sense of responsibility and trust and are completely forgetful of devotion you ought to pay your Lord. You go on pilgrimage to *Madār*[8] and *Salār*[9], and many amongst you indulge in charms and sorcery. Those who have taken up these practices as their means of livelihood, wear a particular dress and take a particular type of food. Those who have a meagre income, do not take care of their wives and children. Some of you are habitual drunkards and some even sell the honour of their women unworthily for their sustenance. What an evil fortune ! These persons are bringing themselves to ruin both in this world and the next, although God has provided innumerable vocations for earning one's livelihood. These can adequately meet the needs of these persons and their dependants, provided they exercise moderation and are contented with the earnings that are sufficient for virtuous living. But you have been ungrateful to God and taken to evil means for earning your livelihood. Do you not fear the chastisement of the Hell—the worst abode for anyone.

"Lo ! You ought to devote yourself to the recollection of God in the morning and evening and spend the day in pursuing your professions, keep the company of your own women during night, limit your expenses to your income and save something for helping the wayfarer and the poor and meeting your own emergent expenditures. If you do not adopt this course, then,

surely you have taken a wrong path and what you are doing is not correct and you will never succeed."[10]

To the Descendants of Saints

'Lo! You are unjustly sticking to the customs of your forefathers, O sons of the saints of old! I ask you why have you divided yourselves into groups and factions? Your fraternities have each a different set of rituals. You have left the way taught by the Apostle of God, Muhammad, on whom be peace and blessings, and elevated yourselves to the position of guides, calling the people to join your own orders. Each one of you considers himself to be on the right path, capable of directing others, although he has himself lost the way and is misguiding others We do not approve of those who take others under their spiritual fraternity simply for financial benefit: they are misusing consecrated learning for earthly benefit. They adopt the bearings and habits of the pious because they cannot achieve wealth and position in its absence. Nor I admire those who ask the people to comply with their own whims and desires rather than the directives of God and His Prophet. These persons are robbers and cheats who have rather exposed themselves to a great peril.

"Beware! Never follow anyone who does not call you to the Book of God and *sunnah* of the Prophet or asks you to follow his own teachings. The gatherings of the common people are no place for the prattle about esoteric practices of the mystics since the ultimate end of *tasawuf* (mysticism) is to attain the state of *ihsān*.[11] Can't you see the warning in the following verse of the Qur'ān?

> "This is My Straight path, so follow it. Follow not other ways, lest ye be parted from His way."[12]

To the Religious Scholars

"You deem yourselves scholars, O blockheads! You are absorbed in Greek sciences and the grammar and syntax considering these as the only branches of learning to be specialised.

Hark ye! knowledge is either an explicit verse of the Qur'ān or an authentic and living *sunnah* of the holy Prophet.

"You ought to learn the Qur'ān; master the grammatical and lexicographical principles; discover the occasion for revelation of each verse, and, grasp the meanings of difficult passages. Similarly, you ought to abide by the *ahādith* which have already been authenticated. You ought to know how the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) used to offer prayers, how he performed ablution, what was his daily routine, how he performed the *hajj*, how he fought the enemies, how he talked to others, what was the decorum he observed in conversation, what were his morals and also try to follow his example meticulously. You ought to follow his *sunnah*, but, mind it the *sunnah* should never be elevated to the status of obligatory injunctions. You have, likewise to grasp the obligatory observances like the essentials of ablution and prayer, estate or effects necessary (*nisāb*) for the poor-due (*zakāt*), and shares of property inherited by the kindred of a deceased person. Go through the biography of the Prophet, his companions and their descendants so that you develop an attraction for the world to come. Of course, these matters are in addition to the knowledge of obligatory observances, but the things in which you are absorbed have nothing to do with the disciplines partaining to the hereafter. These are all worldly branches of learning."[13]

He writes further :

"Let the sciences (e.g., grammar and syntax) which are just the means and instruments remain as they are and do not elevate them to the position of knowledge. Acquisition of knowledge is incumbent for diffusing the Islamic way of life among the Muslims but you never propagate the religious observances and practices. You simply āpprise the people with unnecessary details.

'You have made the people think that the number of religious scholars is more than sufficient although there are large tracts where no scholar exists, and where they do exist Islamic observances are not established.[14]

Shāh Waliullah also goes on to censure the pietists and self-righteous sermonisers who are ever willing to condemn anyone as non-Muslim for not conforming to their self-conceived version of Islam.

To the Pietists and Sermonisers

"I ask those who take Islam as extremely austere and rigid as well as those pietists and self-righteous sermonisers cloistered in their monasteries, why they are so credulous, placing trust in all kinds of cock-and-bull stories. In your sermons you harangue on spurious and apocryphal traditions making the life of the people difficult and burdensome. You were born (as a Muslim) to make the life of the people easy and not arduous. You tell them the stories of those who in the state of attraction had lost their senses. Entanglement in the love divine is not a matter to be discussed openly but you present it in affirmation of your own views. You yourself suffer from misgivings in this regard and hold the path of mystics to be preferable. You had simply to learn the essentials of creed and the deep-felt way of its application in religious observances. It was not at all necessary to mix up these matters with the perceptions and practices of those who had lost their consciousness in the ecstasy of mystical experience, nor was *kashf*, the gnostic illumination of the mystics, to be mixed up with the prescribed observances and practices. You had only to ask the people to attain the stage of *ihsān*. You had to attain it yourself and then teach it to others. Do you not know that the greatest grace and blessing God has bestowed on you is the guidance you have received through the Apostle of God for that only constitutes the path of righteousness. Can you then avouch that whatever you are doing today conforms to the practices of the Messenger of God, on whom and his companions be the blessings and peace of God."[15]

To the Muslim Masses

"Now I turn to the generality of the Muslims and say: Lo! children of Adam, your sense of morality has become dormant;

greed and cupidity have carried you away; devil has captured your souls; women have become faddish and men violate the rights of women; what is unlawful is delightsome to you and lawful has become distasteful. By God, the Lord never wants your life to become burdensome. You ought to satisfy your saxual appetite by contracting marriage even if you have to wed more than one woman. Do not become fastidious in your living and limit your expenses within your means. Always remember that nobody shares the burden of others and do not make your life too hard for it would ultimately lead you to wickedness. The Lord wants that His bondsmen should make their lives unexacting within permissible limits and those who have the strength may comply with His commandments in a more meticulous manner Satisfy your hunger with foods procured from your earnings instead of trying to become a burden on others. It is not possible that others will fulfil all your demands. Similarly, do not become a parasite on kings and administrators for it is in your own interest to earn your living. God will suggest you the means to earn your livelihood that will suffice for you.

"O Sons of Adam, if God has blessed anyone with a house where he can live, water to quench his thirst, food sufficient to mitigate his hunger, cloth enough to cover the body and limbs and a wife chaste and helpful in maintaining his position in life, he should thank God for he has everything he needs in this world.

"Anyway, everybody should take up some profession for his sustenance and content himself with it. Moderation should be adopted as the rule of life and some of the spare time, particularly in the morning, evening and later part of night, should be devoted to the remembrance of God through *tasbih*[1], *tahlil*[1?] and recitation of the Qur'ān. One should also listen to the Traditions of the Prophet, on whom be blessings and peace, and join the gatherings held for recollection of God.

"O Sons of Adam, you have adopted customs and usages which have deformed your religion. You hold gatherings on the

day of *'āshūra*[13] for things that are inappropriate. Similarly you have amusements and rejoinings on the occasion of *shab-i-barāt*[19] and consider it virtuous to have repast for your dead relat ons. Have you any argument to defend your behaviour ?

"Similarly, you have taken to numerous customs which have made your life harder, for example, you spend too much on your feasts. Another iniquitous convention among you is to regard divorce as illegal and remarriage of widows as immoral. You spend your time and money on indecorous conventions and rituals and have given up healthy practices.

"You have ruined your *salāt* (ritual prayers). Some of you are so engrossed in their professions that they never find time to offer the prayer while others waste their time in the company of story-tellers. Were these gatherings of story-tellers to be held near mosques the listeners would not have at least missed their prayers. You have ceased paying the *zakāt* (poor-due) although there would be hardly one among the affluent whose kinsmen do not include the poor and the needy Were such opulent persons to help their poorer kins or meet their expenses with the intention of paying they *zakāt*, they would have thus discharged their obligations of poor-due.

"Some of you, particularly the soldiers do not keep the fasts of *Ramadhān*, on the pretext that the hardships they have to bear do not allow them to keep the fast. You should know that the path you have taken to is wrong : you have made yourselves a burden on the government. When the king is unable to pay your dues you harass the common people—what a bad creature you are ! There are others who keep the fasts but do not take the *sahri* (predawn meal), nor give up toilsome works with the result that they find the fasts too exacting."

The Shāh concludes his disquisition to the masses with these words :

> "Celestial regions indicate a wide-ranging reform, but one can only get a glimpse of these from a small opening ; a sample is enough to form an estimate of the pile."[20]

Social Thoughts of the Shāh

Besides criticising particular classes of Muslim society, the Shāh also condemned the sinful innovations and polytheistic practices borrowed by the Muslims from their non-Muslim neighbours; indifference of the scholars and the Muslim rulers to promote the knowledge of *hadīth* and *sunnah* and their failure to oppose the superstitious beliefs and practices of the masses. The religious scholars of his time who were normally pre-occupied with logic and philosophy ignored these un-Islamic practices either because they regarded these as of no consequence or did not want to antagonize the commonality. Shāh Waliullah gave attention to the need of reforming the Muslim society after Shaikh Ahmad Mujaddid Alf Thāni who had denounced, in his several letters, the heterodox beliefs and practices that had crept into the Muslim society[21]. Endeavours designed to reform the Muslim society for restoration of its moral health, initiated by the Shāh were brought to completion by his sons and their disciples, particularly Syed Ahmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā'il Shahīd. The former was a disciple of the Shāh Waliullah's son Shāh 'Abdul 'Āzīz, while the latter was the Shāh's grandson.[22]

Here we give a few examples from the *Tafhimāt-i-Ilāhiya* and *Wasīyat Nāma* by Shāh Waliullah.

> "One of the vicious customs prevalent among the Hindus is that when the husband of any woman dies, they do not allow her to re-marry. The Arabs were never given to any such practice, either before or after the advent of the Messenger of God, on whom be peace and blessings. Allah may bestow His grace on the man who may succeed in eradicating this evil practice followed by the commonality. If one is not able to abolish this usage among the people at large, one should atleast try to restore the practice followed by the Arabs in his own family and clan, and if this is also not possible, one ought to regard it as a wicked practice and hate it in one's heart, for this is the

lowest stage of repudiating anything not approved by the *sharī'ah*;

"Another unseemly practice followed by us is to have an unusually large amount of dower. The Prophet of God, on whom be peace and blessings, (and by following whose practice we can succeed in this world and the next), used to fix a dower amounting to twelve and half *awqiyah* which was equivalent to five hundred *dirhams* for the members of his household (although they were the best amongst all the human beings.)

"Yet another improper practice adopted by us is to be extravagant on joyous occasions and traditional celebrations. The Apostle of God, on whom be peace and blessings, is reported to have approved of a repast on the occasions of marriage and *'aqīqa* (on the birth of a baby). We ought to follow his example and desist from all other festivities and should not be lavish in our celebrations.

"We have also the queer habit of squandering money on occasions of bereavement by way of observing *sayyum*[23], *chahallum*[24], *shashmāhi*[25], *fātiha*[26] and *sālāna*[27] although none of these were prevalent among the earliest Muslims in Arabia. It would be better if we do not observe these ceremonies and offer condolence to the bereaved family during the next three days and provide victuals to the family members of the deceased for a day and night following the death of any person. After three days the women of the clan should apply *itr* to the clothes of dead man's female relatives and if the widow is alive, all mournings should be terminated after the expiry of the period of *'iddat* [28]

Syed Abul 'Āla Maudūdi has rightly observed in one of his articles on the significance of Shāh Waliullah's reformative

endeavour that:

"These passages (from the *Izālatul Khafā* and *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiya*) show how deeply the Shāh had pondered over the social conditions of the Muslims of his day, compared these with the past usages, and pointed out the evils most extensively. Such a critique necessarily creates an anxiety for reform in those who are well-meaning as well as able to draw a distinction between the wholesome and harmful customs and usages. The more such persons are enlightened by Islamic consciousness, the more they come to hate the un-Islamic influences in the society and develop an intense impulse to reform the society of all its abuses of ignorance. The next stage for this urge for reform and regeneration is to chart out a well-defined programme for the reconstruction of the society for giving it a correct direction. This is what we find the Shāh doing with complete precision according to a comprehensive plan presented in his critique of the Muslim society."[39]

Notes and References:

1. See *Ihyā Uloom id-Dīn*, Vols. II & VI or *Saviours of Islamic Spirit* by the author, Vol. I, pp. 112-176.
2. See *Talbīs-o-Iblīs*, pp. 119-349 or *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. I, pp. 203-228.
3. This work was published by the Madina Press, Bijnore for Al-Majlis al-'Ilmi, Dhabel, Surat in 1355/1936. It was later printed from Hyderabad in 1949.
4. Q. 8 : 34
5. *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiya*, Bijnore, 1936, Vol. I, pp. 215-26.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
7. *Tafhimāt,-i-Ilāliya*, Vol. I, p. 216.
8. Shāh Bad'i-ud-din of Makanpūr, known as Shāh Madar.

9. Syed Sālār Mas'ūd Ghāzi whose mausoleum at Bahraich attracts a large number of people who come with large flags from far and near.

10. *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiyā*, Vol. I, p. 217.

11. *Ihsān* is to offer worship with a living awareness of the Divine Being, i. e., with the conviction that if the worshipper was not able to see God, he was certainly being watched by God.

12. *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiya*, Vol. I, p. 214 (Q. 6 : 153).

13. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 214.

14. *Ibid.*, Vol, I, p. 215.

15. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 215.

16. Recollection of God with the help of a string of beads,

17. Loud recitation of God's praise.

18. The 10th of Muharram.

19. The fifteenth day of the month of Sh'abān.

20. *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiya*, Vol. I, pp. 217-18.

21. See *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. III, chap. VI.

22. In this connexion the *Sirāt-i-Mustaqīm*, the discourses of Syed Ahmad Shahīd compiled by Shāh Ismā'il Shahīd and other works like *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd-His Life and Mission* by Mohi-Uddin Ahmad can be seen.

23. Ceremony performed on the third day of a dead relative.

24. Ceremony performed on the fortieth day after death.

25. Ceremony performed after six months of death.

26. A gathering for the recital of the Qur'ān to supplicate for the dead person.

27. Annual ceremony to remember the dead person and supplicate for him. Normally all these ceremonies are accompanied by a feast of the relatives and distribution of food to the poor.

28. A probationary period of four months and ten days during which a widow is not allowed to re-marry.

29. *Al-Furqān* monthly, Shāh Waliullah Number, Vol. VII, No. 9-10, Ramadhan-Dhil Hijja, 1359 A. H., p. 84.

XI

Sons, Disciples and Eminent Contemporaries of Shah Waliullah

Worthy Sons and Successors

One of the distinctions enjoyed by Shāh Waliullah among the reformers and renovators of faith was that he had been blessed by God with sons and successors who kept burning the torch lit by him and propagated his mission so assiduously that innumerable treatises came to be written in local languages on the correct and authentic teachings of the Qur'an and *sunnah*, significance of *tauhid* and wickedness of polytheistic ideas and customs and sinful innovations, accepted methods for developing God-consciousness, means of spiritual purification and propagation of true faith through popularising the teaching of the Qur'an, *hadith* and *fiqh*. These writings created an enthusiasm among the people for the study of religious branches of learning. If one were to recount all these developments it would assume the shape of a history of several centres of reformatory endeavour within this country and outside it, and it would bring to light some very interesting features of the blessed movement started by the Shāh in the middle of 12th century A. H. (eighteen century A. D.)

A Happy Coincidence

It is a happy coincidence that the Shāh bears a resemblance to Mujaddid Alf Thāni, the founder of Naqshbandiyah-Mujaddidyah order to which he belonged. Four of the Mujaddid's sons, Khwāja Muhammad Sādiq, Khwāja Muhammad Sa'eed, Khwājā Muhammad M'asūm and Khwājā Muhammad Yahyā had attained eminence and spiritual perfection.[1] The first one of these, Khwāja Muhammad Sādiq died in 1025/1616 at the age of twenty-five. He is reported to have been admired and acclaimed by his father. The growth and development of the Mujaddiyah order can be attributed to the Mujaddids' remaining three sons with the exception of Shaikh Ādam Binnauri, who was a spiritual disciple rather than a lineal descendant and whose spiritual successors included such personages as Shāh Waliullah, Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd and Hāji Imdād Ullah Muhājir Makki. All the three sons of the Mujaddid brought the reformatory work of their father to completion although Khwāja Muhammad M'asūm had the unique distinction of spreading the Mujaddid's message to Turkistan, Arabia and Turkey A poet has correctly said :

> Light of seven lands, Khwāja M'asūm
> Whose radiance brightens from India to Rūm.

It was undoubtedly owing to the Mujaddid's thought transference and mystical efforts that the imperial throne of India was adorned not long after Akbar, by a prince who proved to be the protector of faith than a threat to Islam in this country. Khwāja M'asūm had, from the very beginning, been grooming him for this noble role and used to address him as the *Shāhzāda Dinpanāh*.[2]

The Shāh was also succeeded, in a like manner, by his four gifted sons[3]. Of these, the youngest one named Shāh 'Abdul Ghani was the first among his brothers to leave this fleeting world in 1227/1812.[4] The thought of Shāh Waliullah as well his reformatory endeavours meant for re-interpretation of religious realities and thereby reinvigorating the Muslim society were carried ahead by his remaining three sons, especially

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz who was as successful in his endeavours as Khwāja M'asūm had been after Shaikh Ahmad Mujaddid Alf Thani. The writings and the thought of Shāh Waliullah came to be universally accepted through the efforts of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz who can truly be acclaimed for completing the work of his father.

Before giving an account of the endeavours of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz we are giving here his biographical sketch which has been drawn from the *Nuzhatul Khwātir* of Hakīm Syed 'Abdul Hai.

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz was one of the most erudite scholars of his time hailed by some of his contemporaries as the *Sirāj-al-Hind* (Light of India) and *Hujjat Allah* Evidence of God). He was born on 25 Ramzan, 1159/11 October, 1746 as indicated by 'Ghulām Halīm', the name given to him indicating the year of his birth. After memorising the Qur'ān, Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz received systematic education under the guidance of his father which helped him to attain proficiency in different branches of learning. By the time Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz was sixteen years of age, Shāh Waliullah died, but he continued his studies under Shaikh Nūrullah Budhānvi, Shaikh Muhammad Amīn Kāshmīri and Shāh Muhammad Ashiq bin Ubaidullah Phulti, the last-mentioned being one of the favourite disciples of the late Shāh. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz has in a treatise given an account of the teachers, including his father, under whom he studied various subjects. As stated by him he was taught *Muwatta* along with *Mussawwa* and *Mishkāt -al- Masābih* by his father. *Hisn i-Hisin* and *Shimā'il Tirmidhi* were also studied under his father and brother Shaikh Muhammad The initial portion of *Sahih Bukhāri* upto *Kitab-ul-Haj* was taught to him by Syed Ghulām Husain Makki, *Jāmi-Tirmidhi* and *Sunan Abi Dāwūd* by Zahūr Ullah Morādābādi, part of *Sahih Muslim* and *Sunan Ibn Mājah* by Mohammad Jawwād Phulti, certain parts of *Maqāsid Jāmi al-Usūal* and *Musalsalāt* by Maulvi Jār Ullah and the remaining parts of *Sihāh Sittah* by Shaikh Nūr Ullah and Khwāja Amīn, both disciples of his father

He was awarded the certificate of competence by his cousin and spiritual descendant of his father Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq Phulti and Khwāja Muhammad Amīn. Both these persons had been the disciples of his father and were authorised to teach *hadīth* as mentioned in the *Tafhīmāt-i-Ilāhiya* and *Shifā-al-'Alīl* Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq had also accompanied Shāh Waliullah when the later had studied *hadīth* under Shaikh Abu Tāhir Madni. The authorisation certificates issued to him have been cited in *Al-Irshād fi Muhimmāt al-Asnād.*

Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz was tall, of delicate built and wheatish colour, wide-eyed and had a compact beard. He wrote the *naskh*[4] and *riq'ā*[5] and was proficient in archery, horse-riding and music. He taught his own brothers Shāh 'Abdul Qādir, Shāh Rafi-ud-din and Shāh 'Abdul Ghani as well as his son-in-law Maulānā 'Abdul Hai. His other distinguished disciples were Mufti Ilāhi Bakhsh Kandhalvi, Saiyid Qamr-ud-din Sonipati, Shāh Ghulām 'Ali Mujaddidi (a spiritual disciple of Mirza Mazhar Jān-i-Jānān) and Maulānā Syed Qutb-ul-Huda of Rae Bareli.

A number of his other disciples were initially taught by his brothers and awarded authorisation certificate by him. His grandson Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq b. Afzal 'Umri used to recite a portion of the Qur'ān every day which was elucidated by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz. He had actually kept up the practice of his father who used to deliver lectures on Quranic exegesis in this manner. The Shāh had completed the exegesis of the Qur'ān upto the eighth verse of *Sūrat-ul-Mā'ida* before his death. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz carried it forward to the thirteenth verse of *Al-Hujurāt*, whence it was picked up by his daughter's son Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq as mentioned in the *Maqālāt-i-Tarīqat.* He was endowed with a unique retentive memory and being precocious, started teaching others at the age of fifteen. There was always a rush of students who wanted to study under him and on occasions even distinguished scholars attended his lectures.

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz was afflicted at the age of twenty-five, by different chronic diseases which developed into such ailments as

hypochondria, leprosy and partial blindness. Some of his companions have enumerated fourteen troublesome diseases that distressed the Shāh with bodily and mental sufferings. He formally entrusted the responsibility of teaching the students to his brothers Shāh Rafi-ud-din and Shāh 'Abdul Qādir, but continued to deliver lectures, writing and giving juristic opinion. He used to deliver sermons on exegesis of the Qur'ān every Tuesday. As his age advanced he was unable to sit even for a short period : he then used to stroll between the old and new seminary and also continue lecturing to those attending him. Between the *'asr* and *maghrib* prayers, he normally went from his *madrasah* to the Jami Mosque supported by two persons. Those who wanted a clarification on any issue awaited for him on the road.

His diseases had resulted in loss of appetite and he often used to go without any type of food for several days. Sometimes he had a continued spell of fever. In his introduction to the *Manāqib Haidariyah* he writes :

> "I regret the deficiency in this introduction which was due to of my ailments which have resulted into loss of appetite which persists like long spells of fever. This is perhaps owing to gastric derangements : there is constant depression weakness, toothache with pain in bones all over the body."

In one of his letters to Amīr Haider bin Nūr-ul-Hasnain Bilgrāmi he wrote :

> "You want to know the condition of your friend : know that it is worse, deteriorating day by day. There are different diseases, external as well as internal, which have made him extremely nervous and restless. Each one of these ailments such as piles, gastritis, complete loss of appetite continuing for days together and movement of gasses causing suffocation when moving to the region of heart and splitting or rather unbearable headache in the case of their movement higher towards the head are enough to make one completely restless : to the Lord I complain and seek the remedy.

It has become difficult even to speak let alone to dictate any tract or a message."

Notwithstanding all these troubles, the Shāh remained affable, gracious and polite to his visitors and retained a ready wit. His gatherings were enlivened with strange disclosures, enlightening verses and the news about distant lands and people which were so graphically described by him that one thought that the Shāh had been a witness to them. Although the Shāh had never been to any city other than Calcutta, he had such an inquisitive mind that he used to obtain all the details about other places that could be learnt from books and the people coming to Delhi from outstations.

People from different walks of life used to call upon the Shāh. Poets and writers wanted to have his advice on their creations, the poor came to get his recommendations for assistance or help from the grandees and nobles, some had medicines prescribed by him while others were guided by him on the path of spirit for attaining spiritual perfection. Scholars and spiritual mentors coming from outside Delhi were normally his guests and stayed with him until the task they had come for had been accomplished. If anyone having differences with the Shāh on religious matters came to see him, he explained away the divergent views in such a manner that the visitor departed convinced that there was actually no difference of opinion between them.

Shaikh Muhsin bin Yahya Turhati writes in the *al-Yān'e al-Jani*:

"He occupied such a place of distinction and fame that people all over India deemed it a privilege to be taught by him or even his disciples.........None could be compared to him in any branch of learning It was through his ready wit that he silenced his adversaries by clever and amusing remarks His gift of the gab, cogent arguments and excellent mode of expression had gained for him a place of eminence amongst his contemporary scholars."

The Shāh had also been endowed with an exceptional insight and sagacity which had helped him to make an excellent interpreter of dreams. His interpretations were always so correct that it appeared as if he had already witnessed the coming incident. This is undoubtedly a distinction enjoyed only by those who are perfect in spirit. He enjoyed many more distinguishing characteristics which, in brief, can be described as special favour from God bestowed upon him. The following lines by an Arab poet if applied to him, would appear to be factually correct without the least exaggeration.

Characteristics unnumbered I have never seen
That have rated this man as a thousand of them.

It is virtually difficult to enumerate his distinguishing traits and characteristics. All of his works are generally cherished by the scholars because of their cogency and fluency and powerful diction capable of capturing the minds and hearts Whenever he came across any weak argument or objectionable opinion, he refuted it in an innocuous manner. In theological matters, refutation of Shi'ism was his favourite subject. He has discussed the Shi'ite creed from an intellectual plane with such a force and conviction that the objections raised by him have yet to be controverted.

The more important of his works that were widely acclaimed were as under :

A commentary on the Qur'ān entitled *Fath-ul-'Azīz* was dictated by him during the period of his serious illness. It was a voluminous work consisting of several parts but a greater part of it was lost during the disorder following the revolt of 1857, and one part of the beginning and two of the last portion are extant now. Another copious work was his *Al-Fatāwah fil Masāil-al-Mushkilah*[7], but now only its summary in two volumes is available. *Tuhfah Ithnā 'Ashariyah* (a critique of Shi'ite faith and doctrines) is his another work of exceptional merit. Among the other works of the Shāh deserving a mention here is the *Bustān al-Muhaddithīn*, a bibliography of the works on *hadīth* with biographical notes on the transmitters and scholars

of *hadith*,[8] but it remained incomplete. On the principles of *hadith* criticism, he wrote *Al-'Ujālatun-Nāfiyah* in Persian language for the students of *hadith*. On rhetorics and theological dialectics his two excellent works are *Mizān-al-Balāghah* and *Mizān-al-Kalām* respectively. In one of his works entitled *As-Sirr al-Jalīl fi-Mas'alatil Tafzīl*, he has delineated the comparative distinctions of the first four caliphs while in the *Sirr-us-Shahādatain* he has recounted the martyrdom of Imām Hasan and Husain. He also wrote a tract on genealogy, the *T'abīr-i-Roya* is on interpretation of dreams and several other brochures. In the field of logic and philosophy, he wrote a number of commentaries on various books as the *Mīr Zahid Risālah*, *Mīr Zāhid Mulla Jalāl*, *Mīr Zāhid Sharh-i-Muwāqif* and *Hāshiyah Mulaku Saj* of which the last-mentioned is known as *'Azīziyah*. He also wrote commentaries on *Sharh Hidāyat al-Hikmah* of Sadr Shirazi and on the *Arjūza-i-Isma'ī*. He also wrote a number of letters to the scholars and litterateurs of his time, and some lyrical glosses on certain odes of his father. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz was a talented scholar with a complete command over the pen: his writings in prose are forceful and eloquent while his poetical compositions bear witness to his spontaneity and melody.

Shāh Abdul 'Azīz died at the age of eighty years on the morning of 7 Shawwal 1239/5 June 1824. He was buried outside Delhi near the grave of his father.[9]

Propagation of the Shāh's Mission

The renovatory endeavours of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz can be divided into five categories as given here:

1. Popularisation of the message of the Qur'ān through its exegesis in order to reform the popular creed of the masses by creating a direct link between them and the scripture.
2. Promoting the study of *hadith* by making arrangements for its teaching and preparing teachers for its further diffusion.
3. Controverting the heterodoxical Shi'ite creed by

exposing the conspiracies designed to undermine the reverence in which the holy Prophet's companions and the Qur'ān were held by the Muslims.

4. Revival of *jihād* or fighting for the sake of God in order to prepare Muslims to face the danger to Muslim political power in India and to safeguard their freedom.
5. Grooming a group of such persons who could carry on his reformatory work in future.

Popularisation of the Quranic Teachings.

Shāh 'Abdul Azīz was immensely successful in diffusing the Quranic teachings among the masses and reforming their unsound creed and practices—a great mission of his father Shāh Waliullah. The late Shāh had died before he had completed the exegesis of the eighth verse of the fifth chapter i., e., *Sūrat-ul-Māida* of the Qurān. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz took over the exegesis where his father had left and continued it in his lectures until he died while explaining the meanings of the thirteenth verse of Chapter *Sūrat-ul Hujurāt*. The exegesis was carried ahead by the Shāh's grandson Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq who had been educated under the care of the Shāh.

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz used to deliver lectures on the Qur'ān on Sundays, Tuesdays and Fridays which were attended by all—the scholars as well as the laity—with great enthusiasm. An eloquent speaker as he was, he seemed to be at his best while delivering lectures on the Qur'ān[10]. His enthralling sermons created an eagerness among the people of Delhi, the metropolis of India, to know more about the Qur'ān which in turn gave birth to a movement for reforming the popular creed of the masses. His lectures also motivated the scholars to translate the scripture into local languages and write commentaries on it—a trend which continues to this day. Millions of people were thus to reform themselves by going back to the Qur'ān for guidance and enlightenment. In the then *madrasa* system of education in India, exegesis of the Qur'ān did not occupy any place of importance.[11] The Shāh's

endeavours in this regard resulted in restoring the subject its due place in the curriculum, more extensive and deeper studies of the Qur'ān were undertaken and, above all, the misconception that placing the Qur'ān directly in the hands of masses might prove harmful was removed It was really a fallacy propagated by the scholars who wanted to exploit the masses. The Shāh succeeded in dealing a death-blow to these misapprehensions.

The foremost intellectual contribution of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, which also contributed to the success of his mission, was his exegesis on the Qur'ān in Persian. Known as the *Fath-ul-Azīz* it is also called *Tafsīr-i-'Azīzi* and *Bastān-ut-Tafsīr* This work was dictated by the Shāh who says that it consisted of the commentary on *Sūrat-ul-Fātiha* and *Sūrat-ul-Baqarah* and from *Sūrat-ul-Mulk* to the last chapter of the Qur'ān.[12] However, the exegesis of the second chapter, *Sūrat-ul-Baqarah* was not complete, nor there is anything to shed light on the reason for its remaining incomplete. The present edition of the work, which has seen several reprints, contain the exegesis of this *Surah* upto verse 184 in its first part. The Second part covers from *Surah Al-Mulk* (67th Chapter) to *Al-Mursalāt* (77th Chapter) and the third the remaining 33 chapters, that is from *Surah Al-Nabā* to *Al-Nās*.

Haider 'Ali of Faizabad, a disciple of the Shāh (d. 1299/1822), subsequently wrote the commentary of the Quranic chapters left by the Shāh. In the *Maqālāt-i-T riqat* Muhammad 'Abdul Rahīm Ziya says: "Maulvi Haider 'Ali, author of *Muntahi al-Kalām* completed the exegesis of the chapters not covered by the *Fath-ul-'Azīz* in 27 parts in compliance with the wishes of Sikandar Begum, the ruler of Bhopal, which has been seen by the writer of these lines."[13]

A part of this complementary work containing the exegesis of the fifth part of the Qur'ān[14] is available in the Nadwatul 'Ulama library.

Another exegetical work in Urdu entitled as the *Tafsīr-i-'Azīzi* alias sermons of Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz was published by Ansari Press, Delhi in 1259/1843. It is a compilation by Abul

Farid Muhammad Imām-ud-din who says that the work consists of the lectures delivered by the Shāh on Tuesdays and Fridays which were committed to paper by a few of the listeners. The work contains the exegesis of *Sūrah Al-Mūminīn* (23rd chapter) to *Al-Saffāt* (37th chapter).

Although the exegesis of the Qur'ān by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz remained incomplete, it contains considerable original material and discusses issues not touched earlier by other exegetes or which were being deliberately ignored by his contemporary scholars owing to the popular yet unsound beliefs and practices of the people in those days. To cite a few examples, the Shāh's commentary on the verse: "*He hath forbidden you only carrion, and blood, and swineflesh and that which hath been immolated to (in name of) any other than Allah*"[15], is particularly illuminating. Similarly the Shāh's exposition of magic in connexion with the Quranic phrase: *Sulaimān disbelieved not*,[16] and several other verses show the depth of his knowledge and incisiveness of his inquiry.

Promotion of the Study of Hadīth

The role played by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz in fostering the development of *hadīth* is incomparable in the religious and intellectual history of India. He continued to teach the subject for nearly sixty-four years. He delivered lectures on the *Sihāh Sittah*[17] and wrote some valuable works like the *Bustān al-Muhaddithīn* and *Al-'Ujālatun Nāfi'a* which promote a correct understanding of the *hadīth* literature and help in appreciation of the unique scholarly attainments of the earlier scholars in this field These works are in fact a quintessence of *hadīth* literature. The number of those who studied *hadīth* under the Shāh runs into hundreds of which quite a large number attained proficiency and eminence and devoted their lives to the teaching and propagation of the science in India and Hijaz. More than forty such scholars have been listed in the seventh volume of the *Nuzhatul Khawātir* of which, Maulana Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq Dehlavi, Maulana Shāh Muhammad Y'aqūb Dehlavi, Mufti Ilāhi Bakhsh

Kāndhalvi, Maulana Syed Awlād Hasan Qannauji, Mirza Hasan 'Ali Shāfe'i Lakhnavi, Maulana Husain Ahmad Malihābādi Muhaddith, Maulana Haider 'Ali Tonkvi, Maulana Khurram 'Ali Malhauri, Mufti Sadr-ud-din Dehlavi, Maulana Mufti 'Ali Kabīr Machli-Shahri and Maulana Syed Qutb-ul-Huda Hasani Rai Barelvi were renowned for their erudition.

There is a very long list of scholars who were awarded proficiency certificates by the Shāh for the teaching of *hadīth.* We, therefore, give here the names of only those who were celebrated for their spiritual perfection or were known for their achievements in other fields.

1.	Shāh Ghulām 'Ali Dehlavi	...	(Spiritual disciple of Mirza Mazhar Jān-i- Jānān).
2.	Shāh Abu Sa'eed Dehlavi	...	(Spiritual disciple of Shāh Ghulām 'Ali).
3.	Shāh Ahmad Sa'eed Dehlavi	...	(Another Chief Spiritual disciple of Shāh Ghulām 'Ali)
4.	Maulāna Fazlur Rahmān Ganj Morādābādi	...	(The Chief Spiritual disciple of Shāh Muhammad Afāq celebrated as a saintly soul).
5.	Maulānā Buzurg 'Ali Marehri	...	(Mentor of Mufti 'Ināyat 'Ali Kakorvi).
6.	Shāh Bashārat Ullah Bahrā'ichi	...	(An eminent Shaikh of the Mujaddidyah order).
7.	Shāh Panāh 'Ata Salonvi	...	(An eminent Shaikh of the Chishtiyah order).
8.	Shaikh Zahūrul Haq Phulwārvi.		

Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq was the most illustrious among the scholars of *hadīth* mentioned here, who migrated to Hijaz in 1258/1842 where he achieved prominence and taught *hadīth* to a large number of scholars. In India his notable disciples who continued to apply their energies to the propagation of *hadīth* were Maulana Syed Nazīr Husain Muhaddith Dehlavi alias Miān

Sāhib, Qāri 'Abdur Rahmān Panīpati, Maulana Syed 'Alam 'Ali Moradābādi, Maulana Mufti 'Abdul Qayyūm (son of Maulana 'Abdul Hai Budhānvi, who was a spiritual successor to Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd), Maulana Fazlur Rahmān Ganj Moradābādi, Nawāb Qutb-ud-din Dehlavi (author of *Mazāhir-i-Haq*), Maulana Ahmad Ali Sahāranpūri (commentator of *Sāhih Bukhāri*), Mufti 'Inayat Ahmad Kakorvi (teacher of Maulana Lutfullah 'Aligarhi) and several other scholars. As stated by the author of *Nuzahatul Khawātir* this is the only chain of *hadīth* teachers whose proficiency certificate is most valued in India.

Among the disciples of Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq, Maulana Syed Nazīr Husain Dehlavi (d.1320/1902) continued to teach *hadīth* in Delhi for a long time and groomed several teachers and commentators as, for example, Maulana 'Abdul Mannān Wazīrābādi (whose disciples popularised the study of *hadīth* in the Punjab), Syed 'Abdullah Gaznavi Amritsari and his son Maulana Syed 'Abdul Jabbār Gaznavi (father of the celebrated scholar Maulana Dāwūd Gaznavi). Maulana Shamsul Haq Dayānvi (author of the *Ghayat-al-Maqsood*). Maulana Muhammad Bashīr Sahswāni, Maulana Amīr Ahmad Sahswāni, Maulana Hāfiz 'Abdullah Ghāzīpuri, Abu Muhammad Ibrāhīm Ārwi (author of the *Tariq-al-Najāt*), Maulana Syed Amīr 'Ali Malihābādi, Maulana 'Abdur Rahmān Mubārakpūrī (author of the *Tuhfat-al-Ahwazi*) in India and Shaikh 'Abdullah bin Idrīs al-Hasani al-Sinausi, Shaikh Muhammad bin Nāsir al-Najadi and Shaikh S'ad bin Ahmad 'Atīq-al-Najadi among the Arab scholars.

Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq also taught Shāh 'Abdul Ghani (d. 1296/1879) who had migrated to Medina. He had the honour of teaching *hadīth* to a great many students who imparted education of this discipline in the *madrasas* of India. Such eminent scholars as Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi and Maulana Muhammad Qāsim Nānautwi (the founder of Darul Uloom, Deoband) had been his students. Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi was, in turn, the preceptor of Maulana Yahya Kāndhelvi and Maulana Khalīl Ahmad Sahāranpūri (author of

the *Bazl-al-Majhūd*). Maulana Khalīl Ahmad Saharanpuri's stature as a teacher of *hadīth* is indicated by the fact that he had taught Shaikh-ul-Hadīth Maulana Muhammad Zakariyah, who wrote the *Awjuz-al Musālik*. The great service to *hadīth* rendered by Maulana Muhammad Qāsim's disciples like Maulana Syed Hasan Amrohvi and Shaikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mahmūd Hasan Deobandi as well as Maulana Syed Anwar Shāh Kāshmiri and Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani hardly need be mentioned here. Similarly, the calibre of the Shāh as a teacher of *hadīth* is amply demonstrated by the *Al-Yān'e al Jani fi Asānīd al-Shaikh 'Abdul Ghani* which was written by one of his disciples Maulana Muhsin bin Yahyā Turhati.

Confutation of Shī'ism

Shāh Waliullah had already tried, through his *Izālat al-Khafa 'an-Khlilafat al-Khulfa'*, to demonstrate the unsound beliefs of the Shii'tes and thus warn the Sunnites against imbibing their creed. The task initiated by his father was brought to consummation by Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz by his unique work, the *Tuhfa-i-Athna 'Ashariya* a book which can in truth and reality be called a epoch making work. Just as Mulla Muhibullah Bihāri's two works the *Sullam al Uloom* and *Musallam-us-Thabūt* had kept the best minds among Indian scholars engaged for a hundred years in writing glosses and keys to these two works,[18] the Shāh's *Tuhfa* had compelled the most eminent Shi'ite scholars to take the pen in hand for its refutation. To give an example Syed Hāmid Husain Kintūri (d. 1306/1889) wrote eight volumes of the *'Abaqāt al-Anwār fi Imāmat al-Āyimmatal-Athār*[19] which runs into more than 5000 pages His son Syed Nasir Husain contributed additional volumes to complete the work of his father. A Shi'ite polemical work entitled *Nujum-us-Samā* refers to other voluminous writings of Shiite scholars like Maulvi Dilār Ali Mujtahid, Hakīm Mirza Muhammad Kāmil Dehlavi, Mufti Muhammad Quli Khān Kintūri and Sultān-ul-'Ulamā Syed Muhammad besides that of Syed Hāmid Husain in reply to the Shāh's *Tuhfa*. Even a litterateur-philosopher like Mirza Hādi

Ruswā deemed it fit to try his hand at this pious task.

The Shāh had been, as we have already seen, extremely busy in the teaching and preaching of the scripture and *hadith* as well as guiding people in the path of spirit. His serious illness had been a severe impediment in his literary engagements. It is thus difficult to visualise how the Shāh was able to find time for a work which required not only undivided attention but also to go through scores of Shi'ite works. Nobody who is not conversant with the political and cultural conditions of the twelfth century of Hijrah (till the first half of the eighteenth century A. D.) in India, particularly in northern part of the country around Delhi, and the influence of Shi'ism on Muslim nobility can appreciate the importance and necessity of the *Tuhfa* written by the Shāh. Shi'ite faith had started gaining influence with the return of Humāyūn from Iran and had gradually intensified with the ascendancy of Iranian nobility in the Mughal court, which eventually culminated in complete domination of Shi'as in the court of Farrukh Siyar, the emergence of Syed Brothers (Hasan 'Ali Khān and Husain 'Ali Khan), dominance of Nawāb Najaf Ali Khān in Delhi[20] and establishment of the Shi'ite kingdom of Oudh undet Shuj'ā-ud-daula.

In his introduction to the *Tuhfa-i-Athna 'Ashariyya* the Shāh throws light on the reason for penning this treatise.

> "The country in which we happen to be living and the times in which we have been born, the Athna 'Ashari faith has gained such a popularity that there would be few Sunni households of which one or more members have not accepted its creed or are not inclined towards it. Most of these people are ignorant of their past and indifferent to the creed of their ancestors. When these people enter into a discourse upon these matters with the Ahl-i-Sunnat wal-Jama'at, they put forward wrong arguments. Hence, solely for the pleasure of God, this tract has been set down so that the followers of this religion may not fall a prey to fallacious reasoning during such deliberations nor unknowingly

> contradict the principles of their own creed, nor yet be in two minds about the matters which are based on truth and reality."[21]

The Shāh does not follow in the *Tuhfa* the conventional method of polemical disputation normally trying to refute the beliefs and practices of any religious sect, employing a scornful and contemptuous diction. The Shāh first traces the history of Shi'ism from its inception and its different sects and refers to the earlier Shiā scholars and their works. In his discussion on *khilāfah* and the accusation of the Shi'as against the companions of the Prophet, he brings into focus the fundamental belief in regard to *Ilahiyāt* (divinity), *nabūwa* (prophethood), ma'ād (hereafter) and *imāmah* (imamate), each in a separate chapter. Thus, he fully refutes the Shi'ite indictments against the first three caliphs, Ummul Mominīn 'Āisha and the Prophet's companions. The Shāh then passes on to the credulous beliefs and prejudices of the Shi'as and finally discusses the *tawalla* (excessive love) and *tabarra* (enmity) as embodied in the Shi'ite creed. The *Tuhfa* covers about 400 pages of a large format.

As the name of this work, the *Tuhfa-i- Ithna 'Ashariya or* Gift to the Twelves, indicates it excells in readability and simplicity of d ction—a fact acknowledged even by the Shi'ite scholars. But the books written in reply are indicative of the anger and hostility of the Shāh's opponents, as for example, *Sawārim-al-Ilāhiyāt* (Rod of Divinity), *Hosām-al-Islām* (Sword of Islam), *Saif-i-Nasiri* (The Nāsir's Sword), *Dhulfiqār*[22] (The Double-tongued Sword). The book written by the Shāh was undoubtedly the need of the hour; it is now difficult to make an assessment of the marvellous service it has rendered to the Muslims of India. Nawāb Maulana Habībur Rahmān Khan Sherwāni, an ex-Minister for religious affairs in the erstwhile princely State of Hyderabad (whose family has always been affiliated with the Shāh and his spiritual disciples) once told this writer that the *Tuhfa* stemmed the rising tide of Shi'ism in India. The Book, published in 1215/1800, had become popular during the life-time of the Shāh

and its growing fame stimulated several Shi'ite writers to compose works to confute it. One of the Shāh's disciples Maulavi Aslami of Madras translated the work into Arabic. The writer of these lines has seen the manuscript of this translation in the library of Shaikh-ul-Islam 'Ārif Bey located in Bāl-i-Jibrīl, Madinah Munawwarah.

Opposition to the British Rule.

In so far as the challenge posed by the growing British political influence in India and the resulting loss of power by the Muslims was concerned, the Shāh made a realistic assessment of the then obtaining situation. His pronouncements on this issue speak of his acumen and far-sightedness befitting a scholar and reformer. Maratha depredations which invariably followed their unending incursions in different parts of the country had, in the times of Shāh Waliullah, virtually reduced the Mughal empire to impotence, destroyed all semblance of law and order in the urban centres and made the life, honour and property of the Muslims unsafe. Restoration of peaceful conditions, in these circumstances, was deemed by the Shah as imperative as summoning of a fire-brigade to put out fire. Shāh Waliullah expected Ahmad Shāh Abdāli to perform almos· a similar task for he had insisted upon him to go back from India after restoring normalcy in the country. It was in his view, the only way to resuscitate the Mughal empire in India or to allow another power to emerge from within the country to take its place. If the Shāh did not succeed it was solely because of the lack of courage and foresight in Shāh'Ālam II. During the life-time of the hāh, the East India Company had not emerged as a dominent power forboding the establishment of an alien rule over the country from across the seven seas, which could have attracted his attention.

The political conditions in India, however, changed dramatically soon after the death of Shāh Waliullah in 1179/1765. Within three years of his death the East India Company grabbed the *diwāni* rights over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, the Company was awarded the districts of Banaras and Ghazipur as its jāgir (fief)

and the Mughal Emperor Shāh 'Ālam II was left only with the province of Allahabad and the pension allowed to him by the Company. An announcement dated 8th March, 1787/28th Jamādi-ul-Ākhir, 1201 in the Calcutta Gazette reads. "The Muslim rule has rendered itself ignoble and nondescript while we have nothing to fear from the Hindus " The British forces defeated Sirāj-ud-daula in the battle of Palssey in 1757 and then Shuj'a-ud- daula was vanquished at Baksar on 23rd October, 1764. In 1314/1799, the defeat of Tipu Sultān, who died fighting the British at Seringapatan, sealed the fate of Muslim rule in India. "India is our's today," said General Harris exultantly on finding the dead body of the late Sultan.[23]

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz was engaged in teaching and preaching at Delhi but he had kept himself informed of the happenings in the far-flung parts of the country. He viewed these developments pragmatically and reached the conclusion that Britishers were the real enemies of whatever influence and prestige Indian Muslims still enjoyed in the country. One of his Arabic couplets points to the danger the British power was likely to pose even beyond the frontiers of Indian sub-continent. The Shāh had written:

I see these Britons, well-heeled,
Provoking sedition between Delhi and Kabul.

The Shāh was the first scholar, so far as we are aware, to declare India under an alien rule as the *dār-al-harab* (abode of war). His elucidation of the reasons for holding this view is indicative of his insight into Islamic jurisprudence as well as his courage and realism in forming an estimate of the then political situation in the country. In reply to a question whether India was to be deemed as *dār-ul Islām* (abode of Islam) or *dār-ul harab*, reproduced in the first volume of the *Fatāwa-i- 'Aziziah*, he wrote after giving an excerpt from the *Durr-al-Mukhtār*:

> "In this city (of Delhi) it is not the mandate of the Muslim ruler that is being enforced but the orders of the Christian administrators which are imposed without the least resistance. What the jurists deem as imposition of the orders of infidels consists of such

> matters as administrative regulations, governance of the people, taxation, levy of duties on commercial goods and the infidels acting as judges and executives in awarding punishment to the offenders like thieves and robbers in accordance with their own laws. Although such rulers may not be interfering in the observance of certain Islamic practices such as Friday and *Id* prayers, *azān* and offering of kine sacrifice, the basic principle is that all these matters depend on their approval: we see the mosques being demolished at their will and no Muslim or (non-Muslim) *dhimmi*[24] can enter the city or its suburbs without obtaining their permission. They place no restriction on travellers and merchants entering the city in their own interest but the nobles like Shuj'ā-ul-Mulk and Vilāyti Begum cannot enter the city without their permission. The dominion of the Christians extends from Delhi to Calcutta and if they have not imposed their direct rule on certain peripheral regions like Hyderabad, Lucknow or Rampur, it is partly because they have not deemed it advisable to do so and partly owing to these States having already acquiesced to their domination."[25]

The antipathy of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz towards the British power gaining control over India is amply demonstrated by the letters of Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd, one of the Shāh's chief disciples, whom he had trained for carrying on his mission of reform and regeneration of the Indian Muslims. These letters were written by the Saiyid to the rulers and grandees to unite for evicting the alien rulers from India. In a letter addressed to Shāh Sulaimān, the ruler of Chitrāl, he wrote :

> "A larger part of India has providentially fallen under the subjection of the Christians and infidels who are resorting to suppression and tyranny."[26]

Another letter to Rājā Hindū Rāo, a minister of Gwalior, was even more explicit of his aims.

> "You are fully aware that these strangers from across the oceans have become rulers of the world: these mere merchants have founded an empire! They have degraded and debased the honour and hegemony of majestic sovereigns."[27]

The Saiyid wrote to Ghulām Haider Khān, a military officer of Gwalior:

> "A greater part of India has passed into the hands of foreigners who have let loose a reign of terror everywhere by their high-handedness. The dominions of the Indian potentates have been wrecked......"[28]

Yet another letter addressed to Prince Kāmrān discloses the intention of the Saiyid in launching the *jihād* movement. In this letter he had written:

> "After accomplishing the end of this expedition (of the frontier and Punjab), this humble self alongwith his followers will turn his attention to India, for that is the ultimate objective of our endeavours."[29]

These aspirations of the Shāh are also revealed by the fact that Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd joined the service of Nawāb Amir Khān in 1227/1812 who was then trying to consolidate his power. Courageous as well as ambitious, Amir Khān possessed the qualities of conquerers and founders of empires but he needed an objective nobler than personal aggrandizement to evict the alien usurpers from the country.[30] Although there is nothing on record to show that the Saiyid had joined Nawāb Amir Khān's army on the direction of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, but the circumstances do suggest that the Saiyid had taken this step with the consent of his spiritual guide. When in 1333/1817 Amir Khān agreed to sign a treaty with the British in return for the small principality of Tonk, the Saiyid parted company with Amir Khān and wrote to Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz: "All has been ruined: the Nawāb has gone over to the British. Now I cannot live here."[31] It is also significant that the Saiyid had met Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz before proceeding to Central India to join Amir Khān. Similarly, he had deemed it necessary to inform the Shāh before making his

adieus to Amīr Khān.

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz had thus the foresight to perceive the impending danger to the freedom of the country and its consequences for Indian Muslims. He also did whatever was possible for him in the circumstances he was placed: it was his uucompromising antagonism towards the British which had initiated the *jihad* movement headed by Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd, his spiritual disciple, and Shāh Ismāil Shahīd, his nephew. It was this spirit of the Shāh which also inspired Wilāyat Ali Azīmabādi, Yahyā 'Ali Sādiqpūri, Ahmadullah and 'Abdullah to continue the armed struggle against the British power in the north-west of India in most adverse circumstances. This great movement of reform and regeneration of Islam, the like of which had never been witnessed earlier in this country, provided a number of leaders like Liāqat 'Ali of Allahabad, Ahmad Ullah Shāh of Madras, Haji Imdād Ullah Thānwi and Hāfiz Zamīn Shahīd in the uprising of 1857 and continued to inspire the religious scholars who actively participated in the struggle for freedom of the country up to 1947.[32]

Training of future Leaders

The success of any reformer depends, to a large extent, on the guidance and training of future leaders who may be able to carry on his mission even in the changed circumstances without compromising the basic ideas and values of the founder of that movement. It was perhaps the will of God that Shāh 'Abdul Azīz excelled many a spiritual guides and his own predecessors even though some of his disciples appear to have attained even greater spiritual perfection than him. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz was destined to guide several men of vaulting ambition who revolutionised the lives of millions during the next hundred years.

Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd.

The achievements of the Shāh's chief disciple Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd (1201-1246/1786-1831) are alone sufficient to demonstrate the role played by his reformist movement in the making of

present day Islam in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. The unprecedented popular enthusiasm generated by the Saiyid for reverting back to the original Islam, with closest proximity to the manners and morals of the holy Prophet, remains unparallel in medieval Islam. We also do not find people, in such large numbers, who, following the lead of Saiyid, were not only fighters for the cause of God but also mentors of creed and morals and who exerted such a salubrious influence on the coming generations. The Saiyid was not only the first man in this sub-continent to arouse the masses for armed resistance to the alien rule, he also warned the neighbouring Muslim countries of the gathering storm, and established a truly Islamic State on the pattern of right-guided Caliphate. It would be no exaggeration to claim that those associated with the Saiyid's movement were the pioneers of India's freedom struggle. Popularisation of religious knowledge through translations and composition of tracts in the languages spoken by the people was due mainly to scholars who followed the path shown by the Saiyid.[33] The religious, social and political awakening witnessed subsequently among the Muslims was, directly or indirectly, the result of gigantic endeavours made by the Saiyid and his followers which did not leave untouched the language and literature and ideas and ideals of the Indian Muslims who gradually became conscious of the need for social reforms and givingup un-Islamic rites and customs that had been adopted by them.

The tremendous religious emotion, both in its depth and range, stirred by the Saiyid in the masses has been attested by several eminent scholars. We cite here the observations of only a few of these.

Nawāb Siddiq Hasan Khān of Bhopal (d. 1307/1889), the noted Arabist and scholar, had been a witness to the efficacy of the Saiyid's guidance of his disciples and contemporaries. He writes in the *Tiqsār o-Juyūd-al-Ahrār* that:

> "A sign of God he was in guiding the people on the right path and making their hearts incline towards God. A large number of these became pure-hearted saints

through the potent influence exerted by him, while his spiritual successors sweeped the country clean of all unsound innovations and polytheistic thoughts and practices. He called the people back to the path of Qur'ān and *sunnah* and one can still see the influence of his sermons."[34]

He says further :

"In short, there was none so godly and perfect in spirit in the whole world in those days, nor was there any mystic or religious scholar who exerted such a salutary influence even over one-tenth of the people as he did."[35]

Another illustrious scholar, Maulana Haider 'Ali Rāmpūri (d. 1273/1856), who had the honour of being a student of Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz has paid glowing tributes to the Saiyid in his *Siyānat-un-nās.*

"The sun of the Saiyid's guidance illuminated the lands and hearts of the people, crowds flocked to repent of their sins at his hands and to take the righteous path of the Qur'ān and *sunnāh* during his travels undertaken through different regions to teach the right way of following the faith of Muhammad. Those who had been blessed with understanding were helped by God to take the path shown by him."[36]

'Abdul Ahad was another scholar who had had the opportunity of meeting quite a large number of the Saiyid's disciples or those who and seen him. He says :-

"More than forty thousand Hindus or other non-believers embraced Islam on his hands while three million Muslims took oath of fealty to him. If all those who pledged obedience to the Saiyid's spiritual disciples were also taken into account, the number would exceed tens of millions,"[37]

Maulana 'Abdul Hāi Budhānwi and Maulana Muhammad Ismāil Shahīd.

Two of the talented disciples and close relations of Shāh

'Abdul 'Aziz were Maulana 'Abdul Hai Budhānwi and Maulana Muhammad Ismāil Shahīd. The Shāh also acknowledged their learning for in one of his letters he greeted them as the 'crown of exegetes, pride of traditionists and the first among researchers.' In the same letter he wrote :

> "Both these are in no way inferior to this humble self in exegesis, traditions, law and jurisprudence, logic and other branches of learning. I find myself incapable of thanking God for the grace bestowed on them. You should regard them as God-blessed scholars and refer to them matters found insoluable by you."[38]

Other scholars of the time too, held Maulana 'Abdul Hai as a specialist in rational sciences while the Shāh considered him as the foremost among his disciples in so far as the exegesis of the Qurān was concerned. The Shāh often remarked that Maulana 'Abdul Hai was as learned as he himself was. The Shāh even paid him the well deserved compliment by addressing him as *Shaikh ul-Islām*, a title sparingly used for the most celebrated scholar of a time.

In sincerity and God-consciousness Maulana 'Abdul Hai surpassed his erudition and intelligence. He took oath of fealty to the Saiyid although the latter was younger to him and had even been his student. He left all of his literary pursuits to follow the guidance of the Saiyid on the path of spirit and *jihād*, devoted his energies and talents to further the mission of his spiritual mentor and ultimately died fighting in the way of God.

Gifted with the qualities of courage and ambition to the same extent as he was a man of intellect, Maulana Muhammad Ismāil could be described as one of those master minds who are born after centuries. A man of unusual brilliance, he was capable of making addition to any branch of learning. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz once addressed him in a letter with the title of 'Testimony of God' (*Hujjat-ul-Islām*). His writings show the same freshness, vigour, eloquence and contemplation on the Qur'ān and *hadith* which characterize the works of Shāh Waliullah.[39]

A distinguishing feature of Maulana Muhammad Ismā'il was that instead of keeping step with the scholars of his time who had limited their activities to purely intellectual and literary pursuits, he chose to act as a pioneer in the field of social and religious reformation. His work entitled *'Taqwiyat-al-Imān'* proved uniquely successful in propagating puritanical creed among the masses. It did the job which could have hardly been accompalished by any governmental effort. Maulana Rashīd Ahmad Gangohi testifies that more than two hundred thousand persons had reformed their creed during the life-time of Muhammad Ismā'il and nobody knows how many people have benefitted thereafter from him.

Shāh Muhammad Ismā'il's zeal for reformation and revivalism sharpened by the Saiyid's guidance, prepared him to fight for the cause of God though his tongue, pen and arms, as the chief lieutenant of his *murshid* or the spiritual guide, and ultimately he laid down his life in the battle of Bālākot. Iqbāl has correctly depicted his accomplishments in one of his quartains in which he says :

Often they bank upon eloquence and arguments,
Often they take up the sword and lance for the right cause.
Chain armour they don sometimes beneath the garb,
Diverse are the means employed, for lovers they are.

Maulana Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq and Shāh Muhammad Y'aqūb.

In so far as the teaching of religious sciences particularly *hadīth* is concerned, the place of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz was taken by his two grandsons Shāh Muhammad Is'haq (1197-1262/1783-1846) and Shāh Muhammad Y'aqūb (1200-1282/1786-1865). Both were sons of Shāh Muhammad Afzal, a son-in-law of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz. The Shāh had nominated Shāh Muhammad Is'haq as his successor and transferred all his books, house etc., to him. Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq continued to teach in the Shāh's seminary at Delhi from 1239/1824 to 1258/1842 and then at Makkah Mukarramah, where he had migrated, until his death.

Being an erudite scholar of *hadīth*, he attracted a large number of students including scholars like Shaikh 'Abdullah Sirāj Makki. Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz often used to thank God for providing him such successors as Shah Mohammad Ismā'il and Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq and also often recited the Quranic verse: *Praise be to Allah who hath given me, in my old age, Isma'il and Is'hāq.*[40] Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq died at Makkah Mukarramah on 27 Rajab 1262/5 July, 1846 and was buried near the grave of Saiyyada Khadīja.[41]

Shāh Muhammad Y'aqūb also taught at Delhi for a considerable length of time but migrated to Makkah Mukarramah alongwith his brother Shāh Muhammad Is'hāq. He had among his students such luminaries as Nawāb Saiyid Siddīq Hasan Khān of Bhopal.[42] Maulana Khwāja Ahmad Husain of Nasirābād[43] and several others. He died at Makkah Mukarramah on Friday, 27, Dhi Q'ada 1282/9 April 1866 and was buried in the Jannat-ul-Mu'allah cemetery.

Other Discip es

A number of the Shāh's disciples later became learned scholars who established their own seminaries for teaching religious branches of learning. They infused a new life in the system of religious education. A few of those known for the depth of their learning or as successful pedagogues are mentioned here.

1. Maulana Mufti Ilāhi Bakhsh Kāndalwi
2. Maulana Imām-ud-dīn Dehlavi.
3. Maulana Haider 'Ali Rāmpūri (originally belonging to Tonk).
4. Maulana Haider 'Ali Faizābādi, author of *Muntahi-al-Kalām*.
5. Maulana Rashīd-ud-dīn Dehlavi.
6. Mufti Sadr-ud-dīn Dehlavi.

All these men of learning as well as those mentioned earlier had also been initiated by the Shāh in his mystic order. They not only carried on the torch of learning lit by the Shāh but also

reformed the lives of innumerable people by providing spiritual guidance to them. It can therefore be claimed that the thirteenth century of Hijrah was the era of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz's teachings and preachings. *This is a grace from Allah who grants it o whomsoever He likes.*

Having narrated the achievements of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, his sons and successors, who formed the core of Shāh Waliullah's movement for rejuvenation of Islam in India, it seems appropriate to give a brief account of his two other sons and three renowned spiritual successors, namely, Shāh Raf'ī-ud-din, Shāh 'Abdul Qādir, Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq Phulti, Khwāja Muhammad Amīn Kāshmīri and Saiyid Shāh Abū Sa'eed Hasani of Rae Bareli. The details given here have been drawn from the seventh volume of *Nuzhatul Khwātir.*

Shāh Rāf'i-ud-din.

Shāh Raf'ī-ud-din 'Abdul Wahhāb, another son of Shāh Waliullah was younger to Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz. He attained fame and prestige as a traditionist, theologian and logician He received education under the care of his elder brother and was initiated in the path of mysticism by Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq Phulti. Being precocious, he started teaching and giving juristic opinion at the age of twenty years. He had also penned several works and after Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz became partially blind he took up the responsibility of teaching in his father's seminary. Several scholars have acknowledged his forte and paid tributes to his literary creations. In a letter addressed to Shaikh Ahmad bin Muhammad Sherwāni, Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz wrote about Shāh Raf'i-ud-din.

> "Now my brother manages all affairs. Though younger to me, he has attained an equal proficiency in all the arts and sciences. God Almighty provided me the opportunity of bringing him up and thus honoured me with His grace. On his return to Delhi after a brief excursion, he presented me a brief yet valuable brochure discussing unique issues not touched earlier

by anyone. This consists of his matchless commentary of the *Sūrat-un-Nūr* and its underlying wisdom. I can say with full confidence that in this remarkable work he has succeeded in elucidating the gist and drift of the *Sūrah* in an inimitable manner which can illuminate the hearts."

Another scholar Shaikh Muhsin bin Yāhya Turhati writes in the *Al-Yān'e al-Janī* :

"Apart from the disciplines prevalent in his days the Shāh had gained a mastery of the branches of learning pursued by the ancients which is seldom the case with other academicians. His works are extremely elegent—I have seen some of his profound works which can be appreciated only by the learned scholars. He summarises divers facts in a few words which speak of his depth of knowledge and intelligence. His book, the *Damgh-al-Bātil* discusses certain intricate issues pertaining to metaphysics which have been acclaimed by the specialists while his another brochure demonstrates how love pervades everything. This tract is entitled *Asrār-al-Mahibbah*. There would be few persons who have written any thing on the subject and, as I think, only two philosophers Abu Nasr Farābi and Bu' Ali Sīnā have works on this topic. Nasīr-ud-din Tūsi has made a mention of these in his certain works."

In addition to the books mentioned by Shaikh Muhsin. Shāh Raf'i-ud-din wrote many other treatises. These were on prosody, historiography, the Prophet's miracle of splitting the moon. refutation of philosophical postulates in accordance with its own principles reality of colours, indications of the Doomsday, evidences of unicity, science of counting on fingers, public affairs and commentaries on *Arba'yn Kāfāt* and *Risāla Mīr Zāhid.* He also wrote several works on literary topics. One of these was entitled *Takmil al-Sanā'a* and in another he added verses to his father's couplets with the same length and rhyme. He

composed several odes in Arabic. one of which was in reply to Bu 'Ali Sīnā's *'Ayeniah* which shows his command over the language.

He died on 6 Shawwal 1233/9 August 1818 while his elder brother Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz was still alive. He was buried in the suburbs of Delhi near the grave of his father.

Shāh 'Abdul Qādir

A scholar like his brothers, Shāh 'Abdul Qādir was known for his piety and spiritual perfection. After the death of his father, when he was still a child he was taught by his brother Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz and was guided on the path of spirit by Shāh 'Abdul 'Adl Dehlavi. Being extremely courteous and always willing to help others he had become very popular among the masses who flocked to him for intellectual, religious and literary guidance.

Shāh 'Abdul Qādir resided in the Akbarābādi mosque where he imparted education to the students Those prominent among his disciples were Maulana 'Abdul Ha'i (son of Hibbat Ullah Budhānawi), Maulana Muhammad Ismā'il (son of Shāh 'Abdul Ghani, his younger brother), Maulana Fadl-i-Haq (son of Fadl-i-Imām of Khairābād), Mirza Hasan 'Ali Shāf'I Lakhnavi, Shāh Ishāq (son of Shāh Afzal Umari Dehlavi), Maulana Syed Mahboob 'Ali Ja'fri, Maulana Saiyid Is'hāq[44] (son of Saiyid 'Irfān of Rae Bareli) and several others.

Shāh 'Abdul Qādir's Urdu translation of the Qur'ān is a monumental contribution, a miraculous work of exact rendering in a simple and idiomatic language. Maulana 'Abdul Ha'i has written in the *Mehr-i-Jahān Tāb* that Shāh Abdul Qādir once dreamt of the Qur'ān being revealed to him. When he informed Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz about it, the latter told him that the dream was authentic, but as revelation had ceased after the last Prophet, he would serve the Qur'ān in some unique manner. The interpretation of the dream by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz ultimately took the shape of *Mūzeh-al-Qur'ān*.

Shāh 'Abdul Haq's Urdu rendering is marvellously simple

yet accurate which follows the drift and content of the text. That the Shāh was able to accomplish this task was a grace of God bestowed on the chosen few[45]. I have had the honour of hearing the recitation of *Mūzeh-al-Qur'ān* from my maternal grandmother Saiyida Hamīra (daughter of Shāh 'Alam-ul-Huda Hasani Nasīrābādi) who had been tutored by the daughter of Shāh 'Abdul Qādir.

Shāh 'Abdul Qādir died on Wednesday, 19 Rajab, 1230/27 June 1815. His elder brothers Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz and Shāh Raf'i-ud-din were still alive who would have, naturally, been most grief-striken. While burying the dead body of Shāh 'Abdul Qādir they were heard saying, "We are not burying an individual but an epitome of learning and gnosticism."

Shāh Waliullah had four sons from his second wife Irādat Khātoon, the daughter of Saiyid Thanāullah of Sonipat. Shāh 'Abdul Azīz was the eldest followed by Shāh Raf'i-ud-din, Shāh 'Abdul Qādir and Shāh 'Abdul Ghani. It was strange that they left this fleeting world in a reverse order. All the four were eminent scholars of their time as well as guides to the people on the path of righteousness, though Shāh 'Abdul Ghani could not make the mark like his brothers owing to his death at an early age. However, his son Maulana Muhammad Ismā'il Shahīd was enabled by God to make good the loss on behalf of his father.

Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq Phulti

Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq (son of 'Ubaid Ullah bin Muhammad of Phulat) was a talented scholar. A progeny of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr Siddiq, with 21 intervening descendents, he was the son of Shāh Waliullah's father's sister. After completing his preliminary education he was instructed by Shāh Waliullah with whom he went to Hijaz in 1143/1730 where he studied under certain esteemed teachers at Makkah Mukarramah and Madina Munawwarah, the most celebrated among whom was Shaikh Abu Tāhir Muhammad bin Ibrāhīm Kurdi Madani. He was awarded a certificate of proficiency by Shaikh bu Tāhir in *hadith*.

Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq was the most outstanding scholar among Shāh Waliullah's comrades. He was also a bosom friend of the Shāh. Shaikh Abu Tāhir had, in the certificate awarded by him to Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq written that he was a replica of Shāh Waliullah's morals and literary attainments. Shāh Waliullah had also composed verses praising the erudition of Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq.

A large number of persons including Shāh 'Abdul 'Āzīz, his brother Shāh Raf'i-ud-din and Saiyid Abu Sa'eed of Rae Bareli were taught by him. He wrote a detailed work on *tasawwuf* (mysticism) under the title of *Sabīl-al-Rishād, Al-Qaul al-Jali fi Manaqib al-Wali* giving the biographical details of Shāh Waliullah, and two commentaries *Duā-i-A'itasām* and *Tabyīdh al-Musaffā Sharh-al-Muwattā* on the works of Shāh Waliullah. He died in 1187/1773 (as mentioned in a letter written by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz to Saiyid Abu Sa'eed Rae Barelvi).

Khwāja Muhammad Amīn Kāshmīri

Khwājā Muhammad Amīn was one of those four disciples and spiritual successors of Shāh Waliullah who are said to have propagated the Shāh's teachings.[46] Maulana Saiyid 'Abdul Ha'i writes about him in the *Nuzhatul Khawātir* that hailing from Kashmir, he had settled down in Delhi. Being one of the prominent and favourite students of Shāh Waliullah, he used to add *Waliullāhi* to his name and was also known by that appellation. That after his father's death Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz completed his education under him, as stated by the Shāh in the *'Ujāla-i-Nāfiah*, and that Shāh Waliullah wrote certain treatises especially for him are sufficient to indicate the place of honour enjoyed by him, It appears from a letter written by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz to Shāh Abu Sa'eed of Rae Bareli that Khwāja Muhammad Amīn died near-about 1187/1773. This letter reached Rae Bareli after Saiyid Shāh Abu Sa'eed had left for Hijaz to perform the *haj* in Rabi-ul-Awwal, 1187/May-June, 1773 and thus it was received by him on return from the *haj* in 1188/1774.[47]

The *Kalamāt-i-Tayyabāt*, a collection of Shāh Waliullah's

letters, has four letters addressed to Khwāja Muhammad Amīn on intricae metaphysical issues.[48]

The Shāh had several other disciples who later became prominent scholars, but their biographical accounts in any detail are unfortunately not available. One such student intimate with the Shāh was Hāfiz 'Abdun Nabi alias 'Abdur Rahmān.[49]

Shāh Abu Sa'eed Hasani Rae Barelvi

Saiyid Abu Sa'eed (bin Muhammad Ziā bin Āyat Ullah bin Shaikh 'Alam Ullah Naqshbandi was a saint among the scholars. Born in Rae Bareli, he received education from Mulla 'Abdullah of Amethi and was then initiated in the mystic order by his uncle Saiyid Muhammad Sābir bin Āyat Ullah Naqshbandi. After treading the path of spirit for several years, he went to Delhi to sit at the feet of Shāh Waliullah. He chose Shaikh Muhammad Āshiq as his spiritual guide after the death of Shāh Waliullah. In the authorisation certificate issued to him by Shaikh Muhammad Āshiq, he wrote :

> "Mīr Abu Sa'eed, a God-fearing and virtuous Saiyid who deserves our praise, had kept the company of my Shaikh and been steadfast on the mystic practices taught to him by the Shaikh. With the special attention of the Shaikh he had attained the stage of *Shahūd* (manifestation) wherein the esoteric realities are laid bare to the mystics and which is the ultimate aim of the travellers on the path of spirit."

Shaikh Muhammad 'Āshiq further says :

> "When our revered Shaikh departed for the paradise, Mīr Abu Sa'eed thought of learning the remaining practices of Naqshbandiyah, Qādiriyah, Chishtiyah and other mystic orders from this humble self. In view of his keenness and also being fearful of the holy Prophet's *hadith* forbidding concealment of knowledge, I helped him and taught him the observances of the *sūfis*, and when I witnessed those signs of grace and beatitude which indicated his

perfection, I allowed him after divination through prayer, to guide others desirous of being led on the path of spirit. He had taken oath *(bay'at)* after the manner of all the mystic orders and was invested with the garb of mendicants, as my own Shaikh had bestowed on me. It was in accordance with the custom followed by our predecessors since the time of Shaikh 'Ubaid Ullah. I have also accorded him permission to teach exegesis, *hadīth*, *fiqh* and *tassawwuf* (on the condition that he continues his studies) as well as grammar and rhetorics. He has also been permitted to give away amulets for seemly purposes and practise the disciplines of the mystics specified in the *Al-Qaul al-Jamīl-fi-Bayān-i-Sawā-is-Sabīl* and *Al-Intibāh fi-Salāsil aulia-Allāh.*"

Saiyid Shāh Abu Sa'eed was serious-looking yet very compassionate and hospitable; he was ever willing to go to any length to help the poor. He undertook a journey to Hijaz, reached Makkah Mukarramah on 28 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1178/19 June 1773 and proceeded to Medina Munawwarah after performing the *haj*, where he stayed for six months and studied the *Masābīh* under Shaikh Abul Hasan Sindhi. Once, when he was sitting near the grave of the holy Prophet, he saw the Prophet coming out of his closet. First he saw his back and then the Prophet turned towards him with a smile on his lips. Saiyid Abu Sa'eed's spiritual successor Shaikh Amīn bin Hamīd 'Alvi of Kākori says in one of the tracts written by him; "Shaikh Abu Sa'eed told me that he saw the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) at Medina with his own eyes." Thereafter he returned to Makkah Mukarramah where he took lessons in the *Jazrīyah* from Shaikh Muhammad Mīr Dād Ansāri. He returned to India by way of Madras where he halted for a considerable time. A number of persons were initiated by him in his order at Madras the notable amongst them being Al-Haj Amīn-ud-dīn Kākorvi (son of Hamīd-ud-din), Maulana 'Abdul Qādir Khān Khālispūri, Mīr 'Abdus Salām Badakhshi, Maulana Jamāl-ud-din

(son of Muhammad Siddiq Qutb), Maulana 'Abdullah Āfandi and Shaikh 'Abdul Latīf Husaini Misri. Shāh Abu Sa'eed Hasani died on 9 Ramadhan 1193/20 November, 1779 at Rae Bareli and was buried there.[50]

Shaikh 'Abdul Wahhāb-A Contemporary Reformer

The great reformer and founder of puritanical movement, Shaikh Muhammad bin 'Abdul Wahhāb bin Sulaimān al-Tamīmi al-Hanbali (1115-1206/1703/1792) of Hijaz was a contemporary of Shāh Waliullah.[51] He remained alive thirty years after the Shāh was dead. Although contemporaneous and their teachings having several similar features, there is nothing to suggest that they ever met one another. Shāh Waliullah went for the *haj* pilgrimage in 1143/1731 and remained in Hijaz for more than a year. This was the initial period of Shaikh Muhammad bin 'Abdul Wahhāb's reformatory endeavours and his preachings were, at that time, confined to 'Yuaynah and Dari'yah. By that time neither Amīr Muhammad bin Sa'ūd had taken an oath of allegiance to the Shaikh nor they had entered into any agreement (for propagation of the puritanical movement and establishment of a government to achieve that end). This pact was made in 1158/1745 which, on the one hand, made Dari'yah the centre of the Shaikh's movement of reform enjoying state support and thereby paved the way for its gaining strength and influence, on the other. It was this agreement which ultimately led to the conquest of Makkah Mukarramah by the successor of Amir Muhammad bin Sa'ūd in 1218/1803 (twelve years after the death of the Shaikh and forty-two years after Shāh Waliullah's death).[52]

The central point of the puritanical movement of Shaikh Muhammad bin 'Abdul Wahhāb was to call the people back to the worship of one and only God, rejection of polytheism in any shape or form, eradication of unreceived customs and rites (which had come into vogue among certain tribes in the eastern part of Arabia owing to illiteracy of the people and their indifference to scholars), elaboration of the difference between Divine Unity *(Tauhīd-i-Ulūhiyat)* and Divine Providence

(*Tauhīd-i-Rabūbiyat*) and its implications in regard to worship of God in the light of Quranic injunctions and clarifications.[53] The success achieved by Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab in his reformatory endeavour is remarkable in comparison to that of earlier reformers, although, as Dr. Ahmad Amin points out, it was due to the patronage of the State which came into existence through this movement and later wholeheartedly supported it.[54] Be that as it may, there can be no denying the fact that the Shaikh played the role of a revolutionary reformer, and even if one may not completely agree with the Shaikh's thought and the manner he presented them, the need of such a movement at that time and the salubrious influence it has had on the people cannot be disputed.

The thoughts and convictions of Shāh Waliullah and Shaikh Muhammad bin 'Abdul Wahhāb in regard to Divine Unicity, its elaboration in the light of the Quranic verses and the distinction between Divine Unity and Divine Providence indicate a great deal of similarity. It was because both had delved deep into the Qur'ān and the *sunnah*. There was nothing exceptional in this closeness of ideas since several other thinker-scholars like Shaikh-ul Islam Ibn Taimiyah had, in their own times, arrived at analogous conclusions for discrediting polytheistic beliefs and practices and propagation of pure and unalloyed *tauhīd*.

However, the range of Shāh Waliullah's intellectual and reformative endeavour was much wider for it covered the areas of regeneration of Islamic branches of learning as well as Islamic thought, elucidation of the wisdom underlying the injunctions of *sharī'ah* and their integration with the teachings of Islam, criticism of blind adherence to the juristic school of one's ancestors, harmonization of reason and religious thought and coordination of different juristic thoughts. He also tried to arrest the decline of Muslim political power in India. His other achievements were propagation of the study of *hadith* and providing guidance to the people in the mystic path of *ihsān* so that they could carry ahead his mission. In the words of poet Iqbāl Shāh Waliullah was like the sweet and placid stream of *zamzam*

(symbolizing love and its sweetness) in the wilderness of Hijaz (uncomprising faith in Oneness of God). The upbringing of the Shāh in an atmosphere permeated with mysticim was perhaps responsible for combining these two qualities in him which are demonstrated by his eulogies of the Prophet and other poetical compositions. Viewed in this context it would perhaps be more fruitful to make a comparative study of the similarities and divergencies in the thoughts of Shāh Waliullah and Shaikh-ul-Islām Ibn Taimiyah than to look for these between the Shāh and Shaikh Muhammad 'Abdul Wahhāb. In truth and reality the Shāh and Shaikh-ul-Islam bear a close resemblance in so far as their depth of knowledge, capacity of arriving at independent conclusions in juristic matters on the basis of the Qur'ān and *sunnah*, breadth of vision and brilliance are concerned (as already alluded to at various places in the foregoing pages). If there were some differences between the two, these were chiefly owing to different circumstances, system of education, remoteness of time and space and, lastly, the esoteric path of spirit the two had chosen to tread.

Notes and References :

1. Sons of the Mujaddid, other than these four, died in infancy.
2. *Meaning*, protector prince of faith.
3. Shāh Waliullah had another son Shaikh Muhammad from his first wife who died soon after the death of the Shāh at the age of twenty-five years.
4. Shāh Ismā'il Shahīd was thes on of Shāh 'Abdul Ghani. All the four sons of the Shāh, namely, Shāh 'Abdul 'Āziz, Shāh Raf'i-ud-din, Shāh 'Abdul Qādir and Shāh 'Abdul Ghani achieved eminence after the death of their father. Their deaths occured in a reverse order, viz., the youngest among them (Shāh 'Abdul Ghani) died in 1227/1812, then Shāh 'Abdul Qādir who was elder than him in 1230/1815, Shāh Raf'i-ud-din in 1232/1818 and then Shāh 'Abdul 'Āziz, the eldest one, in 1239/1824.
5. The bold errect writing in which the Qur'ān is usually inscribed. Modern Arabic hand-written works are generally in *naskh*,

6. Another style of Arabic writing.
7. Shāh 'Abdul 'Āziz was known for his deep insight in to the Hanafite *fiqh* and, according to some, he had an edge in this matter even on Shāh Waliullah.
8. The work shows extensive knowledge of the Shāh in this branch of learning.
9. The Arabic lyrics of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, particularly his ode known as *qasīda-i-lāmiyah*, reproduced in the *Nuzhatul Khawātir*, shows his exquisite artistry surpassing even his father Shāh Waliullah. The spontantity and ease of expression, a quality normally found in the poets composing in their mother tongue, is the chief characteristic of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz's lyrics. A similar mastery over Arabic is to be found in the works of Mufti Sadr-ud-din Khān, a pupil of the Shāh. See Maulānā 'Abdul Hai's *As-Thaqāfat al-Islāmiyah fil-Hind* and *Nuzhatul Khawātir*.
10. *Malfuzāt Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz*, p. 10.
11. In the old curriculum of Arabic madrasas the exegesis of the second chapter (Sūrat-ul-Baqarah) from *Jalālain* and *Baiwādi* only was included. The exegesis of the entire Qur'ān was then not a part of the syllabus.
12. The introduction to the work by the Shāh (page 3) shows that he had taken up the work, at the instance of his brother Maulānā Muhammad in 1208/1794 in order to continue the mission of his father.
13. First few pages of this work are, however, missing.
14. *Maqālāt-i-Tarīqat*, (Alias *Fazā'il 'Azīzia*) Hyderabad, 1292 A. H. p. 33.
15. Q. 2 : 173
16. Q. 2 : 102
17. The six most authentic works on *hadith*.
18. Maulānā Hakīm 'Abdul Hai's *As-Thaqāfat al-Islāmia fil-Hind* (a Urdu version, *Islami Uloom wa Fanoon Hindustan Men*, Darul Musannifin, Azamgarh) gives the details of amazing number of glosses written on the two books specially the *Sullum-al-Uloom*.
19. Parts of this work were printed in Lucknow and Ludhiana.
20. Nawāb Najaf 'Ali Khān had an undisputed control over the administration of Delhi. He was anti-Sunni and openly favoured Shi'as. Even if the reports about his oppressive behaviour towards the Sunnis are deemed to be exaggerated, the fact remains that the

Shāh instead of attributing the *Tuhfa* to his proper name, referred himself as Ghulām Halīm—his chronogrammatic name—to conceal his identity. Similarly he refers to his father as Shaikh Qutb-ud-din and his grandfather as Shaikh Abul Faidh.

21. Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz, *Tuhfa-i-Athna 'Ashariyya*, Newal Kishore Press, Lucknow (1325 A. H.), p. 2,

22. An illusion to the sword of Caliph 'Ali.

23. Mahmūd Khān Banglori, *Tārikh Saltanat Khudādād*, Banglore, 1934, p. 266.

24. A non-Muslim citizen of an Islamic State i. e., one whom an Islamic State is obliged to afford protection.

25. Shāh 'Abdul 'Aziz, *Fatāwā 'Azizi*, Vol. I, Mujta'bā'i Press, Delhi. p. 114.

26. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Seerat Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd*, Vol. 1, Lucknow 1975, p. 389.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 125

28. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

29. *Seerat Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

30. See the chapter 'Sojourn with Nawāb Amir Khan' in Mohiuddin Ahmad's *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd—His Life and Mission.* He had been deliberately besmirched by the British historians as a Pindari chief although his contemporaries like Sir John Molcolm are on record that the Pindaries joined Amīr Khān's forces only for a brief period in the hope of plunder, but fell off when their hopes were belied.

31. *Waqā'i Ahmadi*, (Nadwa MSS), p. 85,

32. For details see Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd—His Life and Mission*, Lucknow, 1975.

33. The earlier indifference to the varnacular in intellectual endeavours had resulted in creating a gulf between the faith and practice of Indian Muslims. The masses had become completely cut off from the Scripture and the *Sunnah* and their teachings.

34. Nawāb Siddiq Hasan Khan. *Tiqsār-o-Juyūd al-Ahrār*, Bhopal, 1298 A. H., p. 109.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

36. Maulana Haider 'Ali, *Siyānat-un-Nās' an Waswasat al-Khannas*, 1270, A. H., p. 4.

37. There are many more evidences to this effect recorded in the

Sawāneh Ahmadi, In this connexion, the statements of Maulana Wilāyat ʿAli and Maulana Karāmat ʿAli can be seen in the author's "*A Misunderstood Reformer*." For a detailed account of the Saiyid's movement "*Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd*" (4 volumes) by Ghulām Rasūl Mehr. "*Seerat Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd*" by the writer of these lines and *Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd—His Life and Mission* by Mohiuddin Ahmad can be seen, The great reformatory work performed by the Saiyid's spiritual disciples has also been discribed in some detail in *Al-Zikr al-Jali fi Karāmat As-Saiyid Muhammad Ali* by Afsar-ud-daula Jān-i-Jahān Khān published from Sikandarabad in 1305/1888.

38. Letter to Munshi Khair-ud-din of Luckhow. Cited from *Seerat Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd, op. cit*, Vol. I, pp. 216-17.

39. See *Mansab-i-Imāmat* by Shāh Muhammad Ismail.

40. Q. 14 : 39.

41 See *Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol, VII for further details.

42. The interest taken by Nawab Siddīq Hasan Khān, both as a scholar of *hadith* and a patron in the capacity of ruler of Bhopal, had made that State a centre for propagation of this branch of learning. He got *Fath-ul-Bāri* published, for the first time, from Egypt at a cost of Rs. 50,000/-.

43. Belonging to the family which gave birth to Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd, Khwāja Ahmad Hasani was a scholar and *sūfi* with a large number of disciples. For details see the author's *Kārawān-i-Imān-o-ʿAzeemat*.

44. Elder brother of Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd.

45. Shāh's ʿAbdul Qādir's translation shows his mastery over Arabic and Urdu. Nobody in India has surpassed him and he excels at places even such scholars of Arabic rhetorics and lexicography as Zamakhshari and Raghīb Asfahāni. A literary taste of the highest order coupled with absolute sincerity and divine grace would have been required for such an accomplishment.

46. Maulana ʿUbaid-ullah Sindhi writes in the *Al-Tauhīd*: "Not more than four persons fully comprehended the political aims of the Shāh. These were (1) Shāh Muhammad ʿĀshiq, (a cousin of the Shāh), (2) Jamāl-ud-din Shāh Muhammad ʿAmīn Waliullāhi Kāshmiri, (3) Shāh Nūrullah Budhānwi, and (4) Shāh Abu Saʿeed Rae Barelvi, (Also see ʿUbaidullah Sindhi's *Shāh Waliullah our Unki Siyāsi Tahrīk*, pp. 173-747). Shāh Nūrullah Budhānwi, the fourth person mentioned by Maulana ʿUbaidullah Sindhi but not mentioned

among those described here, was one of the favourite students of Shāh Waliullah. He had made a name for himself as an outstanding scholar during the life-time of the Shāh. He was father-in-law and also a teacher of Shāh Abdul 'Azīz in *fiqh*. He died in 1187/1773. (*Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol. VI).

47. *Nuzhatul Khawātir*, Vol. VI, p. 286.

48. *Kalamāt-i-Tuyyabāt*, pp. 161-167.

49. See the Article by Mas'ūd Anwar in *Burhān* monthly, September October, 1983 Issue.

50. Shāh Abu Sa'eed was maternal grandfather of the great reformer Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd. The letters addressed to him by Shāh Ahlullah (brother of Shāh Waliullah), Maulana Nūrullah, Shāh Muhammad 'Āshiq and Shāh Abdul 'Azīz speak of the esteem in which he was held by these persons as well as his intimacy with them for they refer to certain events and occurrences of personal interest. A collection of these letters, compiled by Maulvi Saiyid Abul Qāsim of Haswa under the title of *Maktūb-al-Ma'ārif* is available in our personal library. His cousin Maulana Saiyid Wāzeh was a spiritual successor of Shāh Waliullah. He had been duly permitted by the Shāh to guide others in the spiritual discipline. (Also see Osmania University manuscripts, *Maktūbāt-i-Qalmi*, No. 150).

51. Shāh Waliullah, born in 1114/1702, was elder to Shaikh 'Abdul Wahhāb by one year.

52. Further details can be seen in Mas'ūd Ālam Nadwi's *Muhammad bin 'Abdul Wahhāb, Ek Mazlūm aur Badnām Musleh* in Urdu. In Arabic there are a number of works on the subject.

53. The *Kitāb al-Tauhīd* by the Shaikh examines this issue in all its details.

54. See *Zu'ama-al-Islah fil Asr al-Hadith* (Chapter *Tarjuma* Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab).

XII

Writings of Shah Waliullah

We are giving here a list of Shāh Waliullah's published and unpublished works in Arabic and Persian in an alphabetical order, with brief remarks about their subject matter.

(Alif)

1. *Arb'ain* (Arabic). A collection of 40 *ahādith* which are brief yet of inclusive character. The collection was published by Matb'a Anwār Ahmadi, Lucknow in 1319/1901. Its Urdu translation by the pen of Khalīfa Saiyid 'Abdullah, a spiritual successor of Saiyid Ahmad Shahīd, was brought out in 1554/1836 from Matb'a Ahmadi, Calcutta. Later on, another rendering by Maulana 'Abdul Mājid Daryabādi, with short comments was published in 1387/1967 as *Chahl Hadīth Waliullahi* or *Arb'ain Waliullahi* by several presses of India and Pakistan.

2. *Al-Irshād ila-Muhimmāt-i- Ilm-al-Isnād* (Arabic) is about the scholars of Hijaz who taught Shāh Waliullah. The brochure is available in a printed form.

3. *Izālat al-Khafa 'an Khilāfat al-Khulfā'* (Persian). Contents of the book have already been discussed earlier.

4. *Atayyab al-Naghm fi Madh-i-Saiyid al-'Arab wal-'Ajam* (Arabic). A collection of odes eulogizing the holy Prophet which speak of the Shāh's poetic talent and love for the Prophet. It was published by the Mujtabāyi Press, Delhi in 1308/1891.

5. *Altāf al-Quds* (Persian). Deals with esoteric principles of mysticism. It was published by Saiyid Zahīr-ud-din from Matb'a-i-Ahmadi.

6. *Al-Imdād-o-fi Ma'āthir al-Ajdād* (Persian). A brochure giving Shāh Waliullah's geneological table and containing brief notices about some of his ancestors. It forms part of *Anfās al-'Ārifīn* as well as *Majmu'a Khamsa Rasāil-i-Shāh Waliullah* published by Matb'a Ahmadi, Delhi.

7. *Al-Intibāh-o-fi Salāsil-i-Aulia' Allāh*[1] (Persian). Gives the history and a brief introduction of different mystic orders. It was published by Saiyid Zahīr-ud-din along with its Urdu translation from Matb'a Ahmadi in 1311/1893.

8. *Insān al-'Ain fi Mashāikh al-Haramayn* (Persian). The work has been mentioned earlier. It forms part both of *Anfās al-'Ārifīn* and *Majmu'a Khamsa Rasā'il-i-Shāh Waliullah.*

9. *Al-Insāf-o-fi Bayān-i-Asbāb al-Ikhtalāf* (Arabic). Contents of the brochure have been discussed earlier.

10. *Anfās-al-'Ārifīn* (Persian). The work has been discussed earlier. Published in 1335/1917 by the Mujtabayi Press, Delhi, it consists of the following seven tracts.

(1) *Bawāriq al-Wilāyah*
(2) *Shawāriq al-Ma'arifah*
(3) *Al-Imdādo-fi Ma'athir al-Ajdād*
(4) *An-Nabazata al-Ibrīziyato-fi-al-Latīfata al-'Azīziyata*
(5) *Al-Atiyatas Samadiyato fi-al-Anfās al-Muhammadiyah.*
(6) *Insān-al-'Ain fi-Mashā'ikh al-Haramayn.*
(7) *Al-Juz al-Latīf fi-Tarjamatil 'Abd al-Dhayīf.*

(Be)

11. *Al-Budūr al-Bazigha* (Arabic). This work on theology employs philosophical terminology in discussing human nature and social behaviour. Man's physical characteristics and ethical instincts as well as practical wisdom have been examined, in some detail, to show what guidance does the *shari'ah* provide for the establishment of a moral-spiritual society. The Shāh then goes on to explain the best way to organise a social order, the

principles of *khilāfah* (caliphate) and *imārah* (political leadership) and then passes on to the ways of attaining esoteric spiritual knowledge, significance of Divine names and their attributes, stages of spiritual ascent polytheism and its different forms and phases, evidences of the Day of Resurrection and the life beyond death, virtues of righteousness, marks of prophethood, different categories of the apostles of God and the modes of revelation to them. The Shāh also examines the basic characteristics of an Islamic community vis-a-vis pre-Islamic nations and the wisdom underlying the four religious observances enjoined by Islam.

The topics touched in this work are far in excess of those dealt with in the *Hujjat Allāh-al-Baligha* and it examines certain metaphysical and theological issues which have not been normally touched upon by other scholars. However, the *Hujjat* outshines this work because of the depth of knowledge and maturity of ideas as well as the Arabic idiom and diction displayed by the Shāh in that work. The book has been brought out by Majlis 'Ilmi, Dhabel in 1354/1935 from the Madina Press, Bijnor.

12. *Bawāriq al-Wilāyah* (Persian). The tract forms part of the *Anfās al-'Ārifīn* in which the Shāh has described the life and spiritual attainments of his father Shāh Abdur Rahīm and given some of his aphorisms.

(Te)

13. *Tāwīl al-Ahādīth* (Arabic). It recounts the stories of different prophets mentioned in the Qur'ān in order to draw out lessons and rules of *sharī'ah* from the Quranic descriptions. Though brief, it shows the Shāh's deep knowledge of the Qur'ān. The work was published by the Shāh Waliullah Academy, Hyderabad (Pakistan).

14. *Tuhfatul Muwahhidīn*. It is a Persian tract explaining the creed of *tauhīd*. First published by Afzalul Matāb'e, Delhi, Maulana Hāfiz Rahīm Bakhsh, the author of the *Hayāt-i-Wali*, brought out its Urdu rendering from Maktab'a Salfiyah, Lahore in 1381/1962. Other works of the Shāh do not contain any reference to it. Although the topic discussed in it is generally

comparable to that in other works of the Shāh, certain discordant views expressed in it have led some people to deny its authorship to the Shāh. God knows best.

15. *Tarājim-o-Abwāb al-Bukhāri* (Arabic), It expounds the principles which would be found helpful in understanding certain difficult portions of the Bukhāri. The tract was included in the *Majmu'a Rasā'il-i-Arb'ah* as well as the *Musalsalāt* published by Matb a Nūr-ul-Anwār, Arrah.

16. *At-Tafhīmāt al-Ilāhiyah* (Arabic and Persian). It is a mystical work, partly in Arabic and partly in Persian, giving the mystical experiences of the Shāh. The work, in two parts, is of the nature of a diary of esoteric feelings and experiences put into writing for one's close circle of friends and companions and not meant for publication. It was published by Madina Press, Madina by Majlis 'Ilmi, Dhābel in 1355/1936 in two parts.. A very impressive and valuable portion of the work consists of the Shāh's exhortations to different classes of the then Muslim society.

(Jīm)

17. *Al-Juz al-Latīf fi-Tarjumata al-'Abd al-Dhayif* (Persian). Forms a part of *Anfās al-'Ārifīn*, which has also been published separately. It contains a brief autobiographical account and some reminiscences of the Shāh.

(He)

18. *Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha* (Arabic). The *magnum opus* of the Shāh which has been discussed in section seven of this work.

19 *Husn al-'Aqīdah* (Arabic). The fundamental creed of Islām as accepted by the *Ahl-i-Sunnat* sect, has been expounded in this work in the light of the Qur'ān and the *hadīth*. A brief reference to its contents has already been made in section five. The work also known as *Al-'Aqidata al-Hasanah* has been published with a commentary by the late Maulāna Muhammad Owais Nigrāmi under the title of *Al-'Aqidata al-Sunniyah* from the Maktab'a Nadwatul 'Ulama, Lucknow and is included in the syllabus of the Darul Uloom, Nadwatul 'Ulama.

(Khe)

20. *Al-Khair al-Kathīr* (Arabic). This work on philosophy of religion elucidates the concept of *m'arifat* (gnosis) and wisdom of Divine Names, revelation etc. The Shāh has also discussed, from a philosophical angle, matters like *wahdat al-wajūd* (unity of being), *'arsh* (empyrean), *zamān-o-makān* (time and space), *aflāk-o-'anāsir* (vault of heaven and the constituent matters), *ma'dan* (minerals), *nabāt* (vegetation), *haiwān* (animal life), *ā'yān-i-thābita* (prototypes of things), *'ālam-i-mithāl* (sphere of similitude) etc.

The chapter *Khazānata-al-khāmisa* deals with prophethood, its characteristics and the distinguishing features of the prophets.

The book discusses various issues relating to physical world, mysticism and illuminist philosophy.

The section entitled *Khāzana-i-thālitha* gives the merits of the holy Prophet before he was endowed with the prophetic mission.

The chapter *Khazāna-i-thāmnah* gives a history of evolution of *sharī'ah*.

Khazāna-i-tāsi'ah discusses after-life and retribution of deeds.

Khazāna-i-'āshira deals with miscellaneous issues.

The book was published by Majlis Ilmi, Dhābel in 1352/1933.

(Dāl)

21. *Ad-Durrus Thamīn fi-Mubbashshirātil Nabī al-Amīn* (Arabic). It is a collection of glad tidings the Shāh and his ancestors had had from the holy Prophet. It was published with the *Musalsalāt* and *Al-Nawādir* in 1391/1970 by Kutub Khāna Yahyawi, Saharanpur.

22. *Diwān-o-Ash'ār* (Arabic). A collection of the Arabic verses of the Shāh, compiled by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz and Shāh Raf'ī-ud-din. The manuscript is available in the Nadwatul 'Ulama Library.

(Re)

23. *Risālah* was written in reply to certain mystical issues

raised by Shaikh 'Abdullah bin 'Abdul Bāqi, also known as Khwāja Khurd.

24 *Risālah Dānishmandi* (Persian). A valuable tract containing detailed directions in regard to methodology of teaching An Urdu rendering of this treatise by the pen of Prof. Muhammad Sarwar was published under the title *Ar-Rahīm* from Hyderabad (Sind) in September, 1964. Its Arabic rendering by Muhammad Akram Nadwi also appeared in Muharram 1403/October, 1982 issue of *Al-Ba'ath a'-Islāmi* as *Usūl ad-Darāsata wat- T'alīm*.

(Ze)

25. *Zahrawayn*. A commentary on the *Surat-ul-Baqarah* and *Surah Āl-Imrān*, the second and third chapters of the Qur'ān.

(Sīn)

26. *Sat āt* (Persian). A work on mystical philosophy abounding with terminologies of philosophy and mysticism and elucidating the concept of *wahdat-al-wajūd* (unity of being). The Shāh also tries to solve the riddle of co-relation between the eternal and contingent in this work. It is meant for the use of those well-versed in ancient philosophy and also acquainted with the controversy in regard to the *wahdat-al-wajud*. The Shāh has also freely used the technical terms of medical and physical sciences, drawn his arguments from these disciplines and profoundly elucidated certain Quranic verses. He has thrown light on the different forms and nature of celestial instruction, freely used the term *shakhsh-i-akbar* (great personality), discussed divine guidance and prophethood and the different forms these assume and the various categories and shapes of divine epiphany. The tract consisting of 24 pages was first published by Saiyid Zahir-ud-din from the Matb'a Ahmadi. It was reprinted in 1939 by Maulvi Fazal Ahmad on behalf of Bait al-Hikmah, Karachi and then by Maulana Ghulām Mustafa Qāsmi in 1964 for the Shāh Waliullah Academy.

27. *Surūr al-Mahzūn* (Persian). It is a concise Persian

rendering of the *Kitāb Nūr al-'Uyūn fi Siyar il-Amīn al-Mamūn* a well known biography of the holy Prophet by Sayyid-an-Nās. The Shāh penned it at the instance of Mirza Mazhar Jān-i-Jānān, who was an eminent mystic of the Mujaddidyah order in his time. Several Urdu translations of it have since been published.

(Shīn)

28. *Sharh-o-Tarājim-i-Abwāb-i-Sahīh al-Bukhāri (Arabic)* is an annotation on certain chapters of the *Sahīh* of Bukhari. The work also includes the *Tarājim-i-Abwāb al-Bukhāri* and was published by Dā'iratul Ma'ārif, Hyderabad in 1323/1905.

29. *Shifa al-Qulūb* (Persian) is a tract on mysticism.

30. *Shawāriq al-Marifat* (Persian). A biography of the Shāh's uncle Shaikh Abdul Raza. It forms part of the *Anfās-al-'Ārifin* also.

('Āin)

31. *Al-'Atiyatus Samadiyah fi Anfās al-Muhammadiyah* (Persian). This small brochure contains a biographical sketch of the Shāh's maternal grand-father Shaikh Muhammad Phulti. It is included both in the *Anfās-al-'Ār fin* and the *Majmu'a Khamsa Rasā'il.*

32. *Iqd al-Jīd fi-Akhām al-Ijtihād wat-Tajdīd* (Arabic). The contents of this work have already been described in the sixth chapter.

(Fe)

33. *Fath-ur-Rahmān* (Persian). A translation of the Qur'ān already mentioned in the fifth chapter. It was published by Matab'a Farūqi. Delhi in 1294/1877 alongwith brief comments by Shāh Waliullah and Shāh 'Abdul Qadir's Urdu rendering of the scripture entitled *Muzeh-ul-Qur'ān*. It was first published from Calcutta.

34. *Fath al-Khabīr* (Arabic). A Glossary of the intricate words of the Qur'ān, included as an appendix to the *Al-Fauz-al-Kabīr.*

35. *Fath al-Wadūd-li-M'arifata-al-Junūd* (Arabic). The writer of these lines has not come across this work. Maulana Rahīm Bakhsh states in the *Hayāt-i-Wali* that it pertains to ethics and mysticism, although the name of the book does not confirm this view.

36. *Al-Fadhl al-Mubīn fi al-Musalsal Min Hadīthin Nabi al-Amīn* (Arabic). This work on *hadīth* has been printed and is also known as *Musalsalāt*.

37. *Al-Fauz al-Kabīr* (Persian). Already discussed in chapter five.

38. *Fuyūz al-Haramayn* (Arabic). The book contains autobiographical reminiscenes and a record of spiritual transports and attainments during the Shāh's stay in Hijāz alongwith certain scholastic and mystical discussions The work being meant for the learned would be found difficult of comprehension by those who are not well acquainted with philosophy and mysticism.

(Qāf)

39. *Qurrat al-'Aynayn fi Tafdhīl al-Shaykhayn* (Persian) brings forward the evidences to prove the superiority of the first two caliphs, which has seen several reprints.

40. *Al-Qaul al-Jamīl fi Bayān-i-Sawā-is-Sabīl* (Arabic). In this work the Shāh has discussed the legality of *bay'at*, traced the practice to the time of the Prophet and the causes leading to its falling into disuse in the subsequent period as well as the necessity of its revival. He goes on further to throw light on the qualities required of mystic guides and the initiates, the content and method of mystical guidance as well as the pre-requisites of an effective sermon. The Shāh has also given the practices, litanies, rules of recollection and contemplation prescribed by the Qādiriyah, Chishtiyah and Naqshbandiyah orders alongwith the invocations found efficacious by his forefathers for overcoming different sufferings and difficulties. In short, the book is a guidebook for the travellers on the path of spirit initiated in any one of the abovementioned mystical orders, provided they are willing to follow the path shown by the *sunnah*

of the holy Prophet.

The readers of the book will not find in it the logical and dialectical approach which characterises other important works of the Shāh. Rather, a few of the passages in this work are hardly in conformity with the Shāh's reformative attitude and scholarly style as, for instance, giving the names of the *Ashāb-i-Kahf* (the Seven Sleepers) he says that "these names of the *Ashāb-i-Kahf* are protection against being drowned, burnt or any type of unnatural death", although there is nothing to support this contention in any authentic *hadīth*.

The apparent reason for proffering such views is that this book was written by the Shāh before he set out for pilgrimage to the two holy cities in 1143/1731. He has given in it the names of his spiritual guides, their authorisations and mantles bestowed on him, but he does not say anything about his most esteemed mentor Shaikh Abu Tāhir Madani. In the *Al-Juz al-Latīf fi Tarjamata-al 'Abd al Dhayīf* on the contrary, he has written: "I was draped with the costume of mystics by Shaikh Abu Tāhir Madani which is more precious than the cloaks of all the mystics."[2] Similarly in enumerating his teachers of *hadīth* he speaks of his father Shāh 'Abdur Rahīm and Hāji Muhammad Afzal, but is silent about Shaikh Abu Tāhir and others from whom he studied the subject in Hijāz.[3]

Notwithstanding the shortcomings stated above, the Shāh's predilection for reform and renovation comes to the serface in different ways. He omits to mention the then prevalent *salāt-i-m'akūs* (inverted prayers) since there is nothing to support it in the *ahādīth* or the juristic opinions of the scholars. Another practice followed by the mystics of the time was to practise remembrance of God in a loud voice with the scripture placed alternatively in front and back and on the right and left sides. The Shāh has disapproved this method as being disrespectful to the Qur'ān. He has also questioned the authenticity of certain sayings attributed to the holy Prophet, cited by different mystical orders, to show that the Prophet recommended the customs and systems of *sulūk* (journey of spirit). His critical approach to

the issue is evinced by the passage extracted here from the *Shifā-al-'Alīl*:

> "I declare that one should not keep company of illiterate *sufīs*, nor of illiterate men of piety, nor of the legists going by the letter of the law, nor of the scholastics who rely exclusively on their own reason and reject everything transmitted from the scholars of old. A seeker after truth ought to be a learned mystic, inclined to renunciation of wordly desires, always immersed in the remembrance of Allah and ever inclined to follow the practice of the Prophet as well as keen to learn more about *hadīth* and lives of the Prophet's companions. He ought to be desirous of being enlightened by legists predisposed to *hadīth* and by scholars who are not opinionated but place reliance on the *sunnah* in the matters of creed. He ought also to obtain the guidance of mystics who are learned as well as travellers on the path of spirit, neither given to laborious exercises nor making the religion hard by adding anything to the practice of the holy Prophet."[4]

The Shāh's inclination towards harmonization and reconciliation (which was his inherited trait) is evident in this work also. He did not favour giving preference to any one of the juristic schools over another and argued that the principles enunciated by all these schools should be accepted in principle but in the case of specific issues only the juristic opinion nearest to a well-known *sunnah* should be followed.[5]

Apart from the manuscripts of the book found at different places, it was first lethographed by the Al-Jamīliyah Press of Al-Haj Mansūr Muhammad of Egypt in 1290/1873 with an introduction and comments by Maulana Muhammad Sādiq of Madras. A copy of this edition, which was scribed by Abdul-'āl-Ahmad, is available in the Nadwatul 'Ulama Library. An Urdu translation of it was completed by Maulana Khurram 'Ali Bilhauri (d. 1271/1855) in 1260/1844 who writes in his foreword: "The

explanatory notes of the author's son and scholar, Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, were augmented by me in the Urdu translation". The Urdu version was first published from Maib'a Darakhshāni in 1278/1861 and then reprinted by Matb'a Nizāmi of Kanpur in 1307/1889.

(Kāf)

41. *Kashf al-Ghain fi Sharh ir-Rub'āyatain* (Persian). It is a commentary on two *ruba'is* (quartains) of Khwāja Bāqi Billāh, published by the Mujtabāyi Press, Delhi in 1310/1892.

(Lām)

42. *Lam'āt* (Persian). The tract, since printed, is on *sufism.*

(Mīm)

43. *Al-Maqālatul Wadhiyata fi-Al-Nasīhata wal-Wasīyah* (Persian) Also known as the *Wasiyat Nāma* has been published several times. Qāzi Thanāullah Pānīpati had annotated the work in the light of the Shāh's *Irshād al-Tālibīn*, which was published by Muti-ur-Rahman Press, Delhi in 1268/1852.

44. *Al-Muqaddamatus San'iyata fi-al-Intisār-i-lil Firaqatis Sunniyah* (Arabic). It is the Arabic rendering of the Shāh's *Radd-i-Rawāfidh* with certain additions and comments. Manuscripts of this work are available in the libraries of Tonk and Bhopal. It has been recently published from Delhi by Maulāna 'Abul Hasan Zayd Mujaddidi.*

45. *Al-Muqaddamat-o-fi-Qawānīn al-Tarjumah* (Persian). This work has since been printed. It also forms part of the *Fath-ur-Rahmān.*

46. *Al-Musawwah min Ahādīth al-Muwatta* (Arabic). A commentary on the *Muwatta* of Imām Mālik which has twice been brought out from Delhi and once from Makkah Mukarramah.

47. *Musaffā* (Persian). A commentary on Imām Mālik's *Muwatta* in Persian which shows his depth of knowledge and

insight into the science of *hadīth*. It was first published by Matb'a Farūqi, Delhi, and then reprinted by Matb'a Murtadhawi, Delhi in 1293/1876.

48. *Al-Maktūb al-Madani* (Arabic). A letter written to Shaikh Ismā'il bin 'Abdullah Rūmi comparing the concepts of *wahdat-al-wajūd* (Unity of Being) and *wahdat-al-shahūd* (Unity of Manifestation). It forms part of the *Al-Tafhimāt-i-Ilāhiya* and has also been published separately.

49. *Maktūbāt m'a-i-Manāqib Imām Bukhāri wa Fazīlat-i-Ibn-Taymiyah* (Persian). The work brought out under this title by Maulvi 'Abdur Rauf of Nazīriah Library comprises two letters written by the Shāh acclaiming Imām Bukhāri and Hāfiz Ibn Taimiyah. It is also included in some of his other works.

(Nūn)

50. *An-Nabadatul Ibrīziyāh fil Latīfatil 'Azīziyah* (Persian). It has been brought out with the *Anfās-al-'Arifīn* as well as the *Majmu'a Khamsa Rasā'il* and gives a biographical account of Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz Dehlavi and his ancestors and descendants. Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz was he maternal great grandfather of the Shāh.

51. *An-Nawādiro min Ahādīth-i-Saiyīd al-Awā'il wal-Awākhir* (Arabic). It has been published with the *Musalsalāt*.

(He)

52. *Hama'āt* (Persian). This work of sixty pages of average size and published by Tuhfah Muhammadiyah Press, is on the subject of sufism. "When Allah took it upon Himself to safeguard Islam and it became predominant over other religions", says Shāh Waliullah in his introduction to the book, "the incompatible and hostile characteristics of the Arab and non-Arab temperament vanished completely. Islam has an external as well as an internal aspect. The exterior is related to its form and appearance, the timings (of rituals) and its structure and composition. All these have been protected and can be relied upon to close the door of deviations. The internal or the

intrinsic feature relates to illumination and attainment of spiritual sublimity which, in turn, depends on two things. The external form has been bequeathed to the successors of the Prophet who have protected the *sharīa*. They include the jurists, scholars of *hadīth*, fighters for the cause of God and the reciters of the Qur'ān. The esoteric aspect of Islam also known as *ihsān* (purification of heart) is watched over by those whose hearts are illuminated, have a living awareness of its sublime nature, are virtuous in their deeds and are admirable in their behaviour. These (*sufīs*) have always had an intuition of spiritual exercises suitable for the people of their times. God has blessed their companionship and speech with effectiveness, made their hearts pure and illuminated and given them miraculous powers. Different mystic orders have prescribed their own spiritual exercises and litanies which have helped those initiated in those orders to advance on the path of spirit. The followers of various mystic orders prefer their own order over others and this may be correct to an extent because of their peculiarities, but it would be wrong to regard the excellence of any order as absolute and all-inclusive."

The Shāh has given a history of different mystical orders, their founders and the transformations undergone by them from time to time since the days of the holy Prophet, in the exercises undertaken for attaining spiritual perfection. His description throws profound light on the development of mysticism. He has discussed *wahdat-al-wajūd* (Unity of Being) as propounded by the Shaikh Akbar Muhi-ud-din al-'Arabi (560-638/1165-1240) and traced the development of sufism since its greatest pioneer Junaid of Baghdad (d.298/910) who had systematized the discipline. The Shāh has enumerated the basic requisites and mainstays of the travellers on the path of spirit, considered essential by Shaikh Junaid, and thereafter given the revised procedures and exercises prescribed by subsequent renewers of the discipline in view of the changed conditions and temperaments of the people in their own times. The Shāh has outlined the practices he considered necessary for spiritual training during his own time

and the things that need to be given attention or avoided. Like a physician he gives the reasons for different exercises being helpful or injurious to the initiates and suggests the corrective measures as well as the different states and stations that a traveller may happen to attain in his journey of spirit. The spirituality of the holy Prophet's companions, their successors, and the pious of old has been spoken of by the Shāh as *ihsān*. He also describes the differing capabilities of the people and the function of man's *latā'if* (namely, the body, mind and will) for spiritual ascent.

The intricate and subtle aspects of mysticism discussed by the Shāh in this work mark him out as an expert physician in the spiritual field.

53. *Hawām'e Sharh-i-Hizb al-Bahr (Persian).* The book has since been published.

Notes and References :

1. The Shah's views expressed in this book about the power of clairvoyance in the graves is not in accord with what he has written *in Hujjat Allāh al-Bāligha*, *Tafhimāt-i-Ilāhiya* and *Al-Fauz al-Kabīr*, although there is room for its different interpretation. (see *Hifzal-Imān* by Maulana 'Ashraf Ali Thānwi). Nevertheless these views of doubtful validity, though supported by the experiences of certain mystics, can mislead others. Imām Mālik had once pointing out to the grave of the holy Prophet remarked : "Something can be accepted or rejected from the sayings of every man, save those of the one who is burried here".
2. *Al-Juz-al-Latif*, p. 5, Maktaba Salfiyah, Lahore.
3. Dr. Mazhar Baqa writes in the *Usūl Fiqh aur Shāh Waliullah* (Adāra Tahqīqāt-i-Islāmi, Islāmābād, Pakistan) that this book was written after the Shāh returned from Hijāz but this is a conjecture not supported by the circumstantial and internal evidences, mentioned above, which clearly indicate that the book was written by the Shāh during the period between his father's death in 1131/1719 and the journey undertaken for *haj* in 1143/1731, when he acted as the spiritual guide of his father's disciples.

   The Nadwatul 'Ulama Library has two old manuscripts of the *Al-Qaulal-Jamil.* One of it was copied by Syed Qutb-ul-Huda Hasani

(d. 1226/1811) who was an eminent disciple of Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz. It was acquired from the personal library of Maulana Hakīm Saiyid 'Abdul Hai. The other manuscript formerly belonged to the personal collection of Nawāb Saiyid Siddīq Hasan Khan.

4. *Shafā al-'Alīl*, pp. 116-17

5. *Shafā al-'Alīl*, p. 117.

6. The Shāh rendered this work into Arabic at the instance of his mentor Shaikh Abu Tāhir Madani in 1144/1731 while he was in Hijaz.

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